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SECRET—GUARD

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## FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

# IRAQ

PART 13

January to December 1959

SECRET—GUARD



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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING  
IRAQ—PART 13

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No. 1

## IRAQ: ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 1958

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received February 9)*

(No. 9. Confidential) *Baghdad,*  
Sir, *January 29, 1959.*  
I arrived in Baghdad on the 17th of December. The Annual Report which I enclose has, therefore, been written by Mr. R. S. Crawford.

2. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives in Ankara, Tehran, Karachi, Amman, Beirut, Bahrain and Washington, the Political Agent in Kuwait, and the Political Office, Middle East Forces, Cyprus.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

Enclosure

*Annual Report, 1958*

The year 1958 was a fateful year for Iraq. The constitutional monarchy under the Hashemite dynasty set up during the British Mandate after the First World War, which had survived the shocks of the 1930's and of the Second World War and was allied with Britain in the Baghdad Pact, was in a few hours on July 14 completely overthrown, to all appearances irrevocably, and a republic established under a provisional military régime committed to neutrality between East and West and the closest possible co-operation with the other Arab countries. This change came about through a military *coup d'état* but its completeness owed much to the intensity of the opposition within the country to the old régime. The largest single cause why the long-standing opposition was brought to the point of explosion was the challenge represented by President Nasser, who had through propaganda worked up very strong feelings against the régime in many classes of the community and by the same means had severely limited the room for manoeuvre available to the Government. Yet in December 1958, the

Iraq Government under Brigadier Abdul Karim Qasim was as suspicious of Nasser as it had been in January under the leadership of Prince Abdul Illah and Senator Nuri as Said and there was no immediate possibility of Iraq entering into a form of organic unity with the United Arab Republic.

*The Formation of the Arab Union*

2. After a year's relative quiescence following the Suez crisis of late 1956, Nasser had resumed his forward policy in the Levant in the autumn of 1957 and as 1958 began, the developments leading to the formation of the United Arab Republic on February 1 were under way. The Iraq Government was led by Abdul Wahhab Murjan, a middle-aged Shia politician whom the Palace were trying out as a potential leader of the rising generation, but who quickly showed himself to be out of his depth as Prime Minister. The Iraqi delegation to the meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Baghdad Pact at Ankara on January 27 had to be led by Nuri as Said (out of office at the time but brought back as Prime Minister on March 2) and the Iraqi action in response to Nasser's challenge was largely determined by Nuri and the Crown Prince. The formation of the United Arab Republic was seen by them as the crystallisation of all their fears of Nasser, and as likely to lead to the overturning of the Hashemite régime in Jordan, and, through control of the oil pipelines, to the exertion of a stranglehold on Iraq. The Union was also a powerful political challenge, for Nasser was a hero to the great mass of the Iraqi people as representing not only a successful champion against the West but also the only possible leader of the movement for unity of the Arab peoples.

3. Consequently, the proposal of King Hussein of Jordan for the union of Iraq and Jordan in response to this challenge was



immediately welcomed by the Iraqi Royal House and Government. Thanks to the willingness of King Hussein to accept the primacy of King Feisal and to drop the Jordanian request that Iraq should withdraw from the Baghdad Pact, agreement was quickly reached on the formation of the Arab Union. The agreement was embodied in a draft Constitution of a mixed form preserving the two Royal Houses and the international entity of the two countries, but setting up a Federal Parliament and Government with defined responsibilities and uniting the armed forces and the conduct of foreign affairs. Apart from the choice of King Feisal as Head of the Union, the equality of Iraq and Jordan was preserved in the Federal Constitution, a principle which the Iraq Government saw as a better basis for the combining of Arab States than dominance by one nation as chosen by Nasser: a point of view with which Brigadier Qasim has shown himself in complete agreement. Iraq however undertook to meet 80 per cent. of the federal budget in the first year. The Constitution was unanimously approved by both Houses of the Iraq Parliament, and as the consequential change in Iraq's own Constitution required approval by two successive Parliaments, the Chamber of Deputies was dissolved. When elections had been held and the constitutional processes completed by the new Parliament, Nuri's fourteenth Government resigned and he was, after some hesitation on the part of King Hussein, appointed Prime Minister of the Union. Ahmed Mukhtar Baban, a Palace man, was chosen to take his place as Prime Minister of Iraq with responsibilities only in the internal and civilian field. Most of the available political talent in the Iraqi establishment was distributed between the two Governments. These were the two Governments in office on July 13.

#### *Iraq and Kuwait*

4. The formation of the Arab Union was essentially a response to the United Arab Republic rather than something intrinsically desired by the Iraqis. Most of them distrusted King Hussein, disbelieved in the viability of Jordan and disliked the magnitude of the financial burden on Iraq which the Union would represent. Hence their eager desire to recruit new members. It was made clear from the beginning that although King Saud blessed the Union, he was too frightened of Nasser to think of joining it; the whole attention of the Iraq

Government was therefore turned upon Kuwait and great pressure was exerted upon Her Majesty's Government to secure Kuwaiti adherence and financial backing. This question was the primary Iraqi pre-occupation when the Foreign Secretary stopped at Baghdad on March 7 on his way to Manila. Nuri then confronted Her Majesty's Government with the alternatives, either that the United Kingdom should give up her special relationship with Kuwait, so as to force Kuwait into the Arab Union, or that Iraq should pursue its territorial claims against Kuwait. Despite the misgivings of the Palace and his own colleagues, Nuri was to revert to these proposals with variations at regular intervals until the revolution. Her Majesty's Government could not of course accept them, but agreed to do what they could to show the Ruler the dangers of the situation caused by Nasser's plots in Lebanon and Jordan and by his association with the USSR, and the help which the Ruler could give to the Arab Union in meeting them by associating Kuwait with it; they also gave the Iraq Government full opportunities to plead their own cause. But the Ruler was suspicious of Iraq and thought that Kuwaiti adherence to the Union would be dangerous to the rule of the Sabah family: he was not therefore prepared to go further than to negotiate for a Treaty of Friendship with the Union Government and for the settlement of outstanding points of difference with Iraq. The growing intemperance with which Nuri continued to press his views (on June 9 he went to the length of offering his resignation and at times he even reflected the widespread Iraqi belief that the United Kingdom was responsible for preventing Kuwaiti accession) was a measure of the strain under which he felt Iraq and the Union to be placed by the growing scale of United Arab Republic intervention in the Lebanon and subversion in Jordan. The King and Crown Prince too at times despaired of the durability of the Arab Union and even of the Hashemite dynasty in Iraq. The decision of the United States and British Governments to grant \$25 million and \$4 million aid to the first Union budget was seen as merely a short-term expedient which would not remove the fundamental danger.

#### *Position Before the Coup d'État of July 14*

5. The Arab Union was not popular in Iraq itself, for it was seen as a union of two

Royal Houses and authoritarian Governments and as opposing rather than advancing the unity of the Arab people. The heavy financial burden on Iraq also came in for much criticism. The Palace therefore determined to ensure that there should be no constitutional hitch in the establishment of the Union, and to brook no opposition in the Iraq Parliament. The elections to the Chamber of Deputies on May 5 were so completely managed by the authorities that the great majority of the candidates who were allowed to stand were returned unopposed and no Deputy in the new Chamber spoke against the Union. The discontent that this aroused only served to sharpen the hostility towards the régime felt by most of the educated people, especially of the younger generation, based on the absence of political freedom and of any emotional link between the Government and the people, on the distrust of the politicians, many of them colourless and ineffective, who took turns in office and whose alleged crimes of nepotism and corruption were the subject of much criticism, and on popular dislike of the Baghdad Pact and the British alliance which for most people still implied British domination and a British-imposed split of the Arab world. The Governments both of Nuri and Baban professed to see the need for social reform and for short-term measures of economic improvement, but foreign pre-occupations and the strength of the conservative land-owners in Parliament meant that no effective action was taken, whereas the economic benefits of Iraq's well-conceived development programme were too long-term to produce any immediate political benefit. As the summer wore on, the internal political atmosphere grew gradually more anxious under the impact of the news of the anti-Chamoun rebellion in the Lebanon and of the realisation that the Ruler of Kuwait was determined not to join the Union, but there was no public sign of an explosive revolutionary situation developing. Preparations went forward for the London meeting of the Baghdad Pact Ministerial Council in late July which was to be preceded by a Moslem meeting in Istanbul to which the King and Nuri were to travel on July 14.

#### *The Coup d'État of July 14*

6. The *coup d'état*, carried out by two infantry brigades, took the Palace, the Government and foreign observers completely by surprise. It seems that the two

officers responsible for leading this action, Brigadier Abdul Karim Qasim, Commanding Officer of the 19th Brigade, and Colonel Abdul Salam Arif, Second in Command of the 20th Brigade, with other so-called Free Officers, had been watching for some time for an opening to overturn the régime. A fleeting opportunity was presented by the movement through Baghdad from the Baquba area east of the city of the two Brigades ordered to Jordan to help preserve internal security there. The King and Crown Prince with other members of the Royal Family were slaughtered by an army detachment outside their palace; Nuri as Said went into hiding but was found the following day and murdered, the British Embassy was sacked by the mob with the loss of one life, and a Republican régime was declared amid scenes of great rejoicing. The *coup* quickly assumed the appearance of a popular revolution. All the pent-up passions of hatred and frustration, nourished on unsatisfied nationalist emotion, hostility to autocratic Government, resentment at Western predominance, disgust at unrelieved poverty, exploded in mad rejoicing and savage brutality. When it was over, there were some expressions of regret at the death of the King, but none at those of Prince Abdul Illah and Nuri as Said.

#### *The Republican Government and the Rivalry Between Qasim and Arif*

7. The Government which now emerged contained members of the National Democrat (Socialist), Istiqlal (Nationalist) and Ba'athist political parties, together with a near-Communist, but it was nevertheless essentially a military dictatorship. Most of the prominent politicians of the old régime and many officials and army officers were arrested for trial before a military court; martial law was proclaimed and a Military Governor-General appointed with effective control in executive matters; movement was strictly controlled, military censorship was imposed and the ban on overt political party activity was maintained. The policy announced by Brigadier Qasim was, in internal affairs, the purging of the administration of adherents of the old régime, the elimination of "feudalism," the execution of social and land reforms and immediate action to raise the standard of living. He promised a permanent Constitution and a referendum to be followed by elections after a transitional period of undetermined length. In external affairs, he declared for



neutrality between East and West, with the closest co-operation with the other Arab countries, particularly the United Arab Republic. It was a policy containing something for nearly everyone, even the Western Powers and Iraq's non-Arab neighbours; all Iraq's international commitments were to be observed and no action was taken to give up membership of the Baghdad Pact. Only Jordan was disregarded, for the Arab Union was declared to be dissolved.

8. Naturally enough, the first gesture was towards Nasser, even though he had played no part in the *coup* itself. Colonel Arif, the main advocate in the Government of Arab union, went to Damascus and there signed a mutual defence treaty with the United Arab Republic. Yet even in the early days of the Republic, Government propaganda was mainly Iraqi nationalist in tone, tracing the connexion of the new régime with earlier risings in 1926, 1941, 1948 and 1952. In September, Qasim showed that he was not prepared to go along with Arif's advocacy of the union of Iraq and the United Arab Republic by releasing him first from his appointment as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Army and then from his membership of the Government altogether, on transfer to the Embassy at Bonn. That this decision was not purely a matter of personal rivalry (though this entered into the decision too) was shown by the simultaneous dismissal of Jabr Umar, Minister of Education, and the demotion of Fuad Rikabi, Minister of Development, the two Ba'athists in the Government. It is clear that the policy which Arif advocated was based on the premise that Arab unity could only be achieved if Nasser had supreme authority, and the steady pressure which was maintained by the Ba'athists, by United Arab Republic delegations to Arab conferences and finally by those like Rashid Ali who were implicated in the plot whose discovery was announced on December 8, was interpreted as being based on the same premise. Qasim was not prepared to accept Arab unity at the price of subordinating himself to Nasser and Iraq to Egypt. The pressure from the pan-Arab nationalist wing drove him to rely more and more on the support of the Communists.

#### *The Advance of the Communists*

9. The Communists were campaigning publicly against union with the United Arab Republic from late August onwards. That

they demonstrated so openly, not only against Arif and Nasser but also in favour of the execution of the death sentences pronounced in early November on Dr. Jamali and other members of the old régime (but not confirmed by the end of the year) is a measure of their confidence and of the growth in their influence during these months. Under the old régime, they had been harried successfully by the Iraqi Security Service. Yet they seem to have had prior warning of the *coup* and were ready on July 14. They were given their opportunity through the selection of Ibrahim Kubba, a near Communist, as Minister of Economics, and a number of appointments made by him in his Ministry, and by Qasim in the Ministry of Defence, gave them positions of power and influence. They also had ready for use a clear-cut and coherent party line, based on violent opposition to the West, lip service to Arab unity, concentration on Iraqi independence, friendship and trade with all countries of the Eastern bloc, and the revival of political life through a National Unity Front of all parties, while leaving aside economic and social policy except for the destruction of "feudalism." This party line conformed more closely with the objectives of Qasim than the imprecise, ill thought out, and, to many Iraqis, unpalatable policy of the pan-Arab nationalists. Its pro-Iron Curtain features drew support from the legend of Russian support for Arab nationalism, from the prestige of the USSR's successful economic development programme and from the feeling that the USSR and China had the same problems and outlook as Iraq. The Communists took full advantage of the pressure on the Prime Minister from Arif and Nasser to pose as his loyal followers and made their political support indispensable to him. They increased their influence so effectively that by the end of the year, the Press and radio were largely dominated by Communist—as distinct from pan-Arab—propaganda, the students were heavily penetrated, the streets could at short notice be filled by their well-disciplined cohorts, important sections of several Ministries were directly or indirectly dominated by them, and through their influence on Qasim's personal staff, they could at least partially control access to him and keep him fed with Communist views. Meanwhile, Iron Curtain diplomatic missions were established in Baghdad, a Military Agreement with the USSR began to produce a flow of Soviet arms into Iraq,

trade agreements with most of the Iron Curtain countries were concluded, and delegations of all kinds were exchanged with the Communist world.

10. The more the pro-Communist trend developed, the more Iraqi moderates followed the pan-Arab nationalists in turning to Nasser as the only leader who could save them. In doing so, they only pushed Qasim more towards the Communists so that, in the period immediately after December 8, some of his colleagues despaired of his ability, and even of his desire, to recover his balance. Yet by the end of the year, this development was producing a strong reaction from moderates of all kinds, including senior army officers and the Shia religious community. And although the Ba'athists and other pan-Arab nationalists were too discredited to raise their voices, Nasser's speech of December 23 attacking the Communists in Syria produced demonstrations throughout Iraq. All looked for some indication that Qasim recognised the danger of being captured by the Communists, but the enigma of his personality, intentions and ability remained unresolved.

#### *Relations With the West*

11. Iraq's attitude towards Britain and America, though expressed in friendly words, varied in fact between profound suspicion (when American and British troops landed in the Lebanon and Jordan) and rather distant coolness. In the initial, mainly nationalist, phase of the republican régime, Britain was the main target of propaganda attacks, and the enjoyment of Royal Air Force staging rights at Habbaniya was put in suspense. However, as the Communist influence increased, the Americans became the main target and even Qasim appeared to swallow Communist allegations connecting America with opposition to the régime. Neither Embassy during this period was able to make positive progress with any of the matters under discussion with the Iraq Government, and their social contacts with ordinary Iraqis were severely limited. Both, along with the Turks and Persians, were asked to close their consulates in North Iraq because, it seems, the Government feared the results of foreign contacts with the Kurds, among whom the Communists are active and on whose allegiance no Government in Baghdad can count implicitly.

#### *Internal and Economic Affairs*

12. There were no especially noteworthy developments in the first half of the year. Oil production had by April recovered to the pre-Suez level, the development programme continued steadily and business was moderately active. The value of the country's imports was high and the United Kingdom share of these, about 30 per cent., was a record, although British contractors did not have outstanding success in the development field. The events of July 14 changed the situation completely. Comprehensive controls were clamped upon import trade and other parts of the economy, and the whole development programme was thrown into confusion. Economic activity was also badly interfered with by labour unrest. As a result, Iraqi merchants concentrated on achieving the highest possible degree of liquidity, import orders declined sharply, although arrivals kept up for a time, and foreign and indigenous contractors reduced their commitments. If the Government had not given every help to the Iraq Petroleum Company to conduct business as usual and in consequence received from the Company oil royalties at a record level, as well as a special advance of ID.4 million for their budget, the economy would have been seriously disrupted. In dealing with this situation, the Government showed almost complete absence of leadership. Apart from the introduction of land reform legislation, their activities were broadly confined to purging the administration of supporters of the old régime and of many foreign technical advisers, negotiating trade agreements with the Iron Curtain countries so as to facilitate the export of Iraqi produce, chiefly dates, and handing out *pourboires* in the form of lower rents, higher wages and army promotions. In economic and social—as in political matters—the Government lived from day to day, reacting to events but rarely guiding them.

#### *Conclusions*

13. Nuri's aim had been to modernise and develop Iraq by evolutionary methods with the assistance of the Western world. His political system had been based on the monarchy, the army, the tribal leaders and the merchant community, and the suppression of the revolutionary movements of Communism and Nasserism. In the period before the Suez affair, he had had some success, but thereafter his position had



become steadily undermined, especially after the formation of the United Arab Republic, and he was eventually left with too small a political base. When the army became divided, he was lost and with him the Hashemite monarchy and nearly all the leaders and policies which had guided Iraq for 40 years. Like Nuri, Qasim also wants an independent Iraq, in which Kurds and Arabs, Shias, Sunnis and other minorities will be united and which will be developed in accordance with a long-term economic plan, financed from the oil royalties paid by the Iraq Petroleum Company. But he is seeking to work from a much broader political base, excluding for the present only those associated with the old régime and the Western alliance, permitting the fuller expression of pan-Arab emotions and the growth of relations with Eastern bloc countries, seeking and accepting the support of the proletariat and fellahin, and allowing considerable freedom to political extremists. Whether he will be more successful will depend partly, as always for Iraq, on developments outside the country, but also on whether Qasim proves to possess the powers of leadership which the highly complex situation will demand. So far his strength has seemed to lie more in mediation, in adjusting his course to conflicting pressures by manoeuvre, rather than in imposing his own leadership. It seems inevitable that he will have to continue for as far ahead as can be foreseen to rely on authoritarian methods of Government based on the army. But if he is to succeed, he will also have to show that he is a national leader drawing his support from pan-Arab nationalists as well as the Left, safeguarding the interests of the army hierarchy and the middle class as well as the workers, and not merely, as towards the end of the year he seemed to be becoming, the idol of the mob, the students and the Communist Party. Iraq is too complex and explosive a country to be governed for long without adroit and firm leadership.

### Diary 1958

#### January

- 7 Communist Party printing press seized and several Party members arrested.
- 11 General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of United States Chiefs of Staff, visits Baghdad.
- 15 King Feisal and the Crown Prince visit Jalawla area to see victims of flood.
- 17 Committee appointed to examine question of agencies in Iraq of foreign firms.

#### January

- 20 Prime Minister Abdul Wahab Mirjan declares intention of Iraq to institute economic boycott of France "if other Arab League members do likewise."
- 21 Mr. George Brown, M.P., visits Iraq.
- 24 Visit to Baghdad of Turkish Prime Minister.
- 27 Baghdad Pact Council Meeting in Ankara—Nuri as Said leads Iraqi delegation; Combined Military Planning Staff created; United States announces ID. 3,570,000 economic aid for Pact countries.
- 30 Suleiman Toukan, Jordanian Minister of Court, visits King Feisal with message from King Hussein.

#### February

- 1 Announcement of creation of United Arab Republic. Abdul Wahab Mirjan complains publicly that Iraq was not consulted. Budget passed by Chamber of Deputies.
- 6 King Feisal postpones State Visit to Delhi.
- 9 Sir William Hayter visits Baghdad.
- 11 King Feisal visits Jordan. Federation talks begin.
- 13 The Crown Prince joins the King in Amman.
- 14 The two Kings agree to unite their countries, under title of "Arab Union."
- 17 Both Iraqi Chambers unanimously ratify Arab Union agreement.
- 20 Nadim al Pachachi, Minister of Finance, resigns.
- 25 Minister for Foreign Affairs leaves on visit to Amman and Riyadh.
- 27 Abdul Wahab Mirjan, in a radio speech, criticises President Nasser's attitude towards Arab Union.

#### March

- 2 Abdul Wahab Mirjan's Cabinet resigns.
- 3 Nuri as Said takes office as Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, with Tawfiq Suwaidi, Deputy Prime Minister, and Dr. Fadhl Jamali, Foreign Minister.
- 5 Syrian Government blocks transit trade between Jordan and Lebanon. Iraq undertakes to supply Jordan with oil.
- 6 Nuri as Said promises women "political rights" under new constitution.
- 7 King Feisal receives Mr. Selwyn Lloyd on way to South-East Asia Treaty Organisation Council Meeting in Manila.
- 8 Iraqi-Jordanian Conference on Arab Union Constitution opens in Baghdad.
- 19 Arab Union Constitution published.
- 23 Mr. M. B. Jacomb, First Secretary (Information) at British Embassy, dies of poliomyelitis.
- 26 Jordanian and Iraqi Parliaments approve Arab Union Constitution. Iraqi Parliament approves consequential amendment to Iraq Constitution and is dissolved as from March 28 to enable election to be held in May and endorsement given by new Chamber as required by Constitution.

#### April

- 1 Scientific Council of Baghdad Pact meets in Baghdad under chairmanship of Sir John Cockcroft.
- 9 Iraqi participants in Moscow Youth Festival of 1957 sentenced to imprisonment.
- 10 Tawfiq Suwaidi meets Ruler of Kuwait in Lebanon.

#### April

- 10 General Rafiq Arif, Chief of General Staff, visits Jordan for talks on unification of Arab Union forces.
- 26 Third Development Week opened by King Feisal.
- 27 Dr. Jamali leaves for visit to Khartoum and Jeddah.
- 28 Iraq postpones contribution to Arab League Budget, due to "financial difficulties arising out of destruction of Syrian oil pipelines."

#### May

- 2 Arab Union economic talks begin in Baghdad.
- 5 General elections. 118 Deputies returned unopposed.
- 7 Commander-in-Chief Pakistan Navy visits Iraq.
- 10 King Feisal inaugurates new Parliament.
- 11 Ruler of Kuwait arrives for talks on Kuwait-Arab Union relations.
- 12 New Chamber unanimously passes Arab Union Constitution.
- 13 King Hussein of Jordan visits Baghdad.
- 14 Establishment of Arab Union. Nuri as Said's Cabinet resigns.
- 17 Ahmed Mukhtar Baban asked to form new Iraqi National Cabinet.
- 19 Arab Union Government appointed with Nuri as Said as Prime Minister.
- 21 United Kingdom recognises Arab Union, also recognised by Pakistan, Iran, Spain, India and Japan.
- 24 King Feisal and Crown Prince leave for Amman to attend Jordanian Army Day Meeting of Arab Union Parliament. United States, Turkey, Sweden and Tunisia (first Arab country) recognise Arab Union.

#### June

- 1 A.C.M.E.T. delegation in Iraq.
- 2 Crown Prince Abdul Illah leaves for private visit to London.
- 9 Iraq Parliament approves amendment of Iraq Constitution (required to conform with Arab Union Constitution) and is then prorogued.
- 10 Nuri as Said offers his resignation but agrees to withdraw it a few days later.
- 17 Nuri as Said presents first Arab Union Budget to Union Parliament in Amman.
- 23 Nuri as Said visits London unofficially for talks with British Ministers.
- 26 Kamil Chaderchi released from prison.

#### July

- 14 Army *coup d'état* led by Commanding Officer of 19th Brigade, Brigadier Abdul Karim Qasim. Revolutionaries murder Royal Family and assume power as Republican Government with Brigadier Qasim as Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief. Colonel Abdul Salam Arif as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. British Embassy and Consulate sacked and Colonel Graham killed by mob, who also kill Ibrahim Hashim and Sulaiman Touqah, Jordanian members of Arab Union Government, and four visiting business men, three American and one German.
- 15 USSR and United Arab Republic recognise new régime. Former Prime Minister, Nuri as Said, apprehended and murdered. Abolition of tribal law proclaimed. Many leading personalities of old régime imprisoned, including army officers.

#### July

- 21 Colonel Arif meets President Nasser in Damascus and signs mutual defence agreement with the United Arab Republic. Provisional Constitution announced.
- 27 United Kingdom recognises new Iraqi Government.
- 31 Outbreak of fire at Khanaqin Oil Company oil depot in Baghdad.

#### August

- 1 Law setting up Popular Resistance Forces.
- 2 United States recognise new Iraqi Government.
- 7 Law reducing rents.
- 9 Law for the punishment of conspiracy and corruption after trial by a Special High Military Court.
- 16 Trial of General Ghazi Daghestani begins before High Military Court.
- 20 Law for the disclosure of public servants' fortunes.
- 21-26 Crown Prince Badr of Yemen visits Baghdad.
- 26 Colonel Arif visits Basra, brawling between Communists and Ba'athists.

#### September

- 1 Prime Minister announces foreign contractors will have to bring their own capital to Iraq instead of receiving advances. Military Governor's proclamation against political activities tending to disunity.
- 2 Announcement of Prime Minister's agreement to return to Iraq of Mulla Mustafa Barzani.
- 3 Colonel Arif speaks in Hillah—Communists demonstrate against him.
- 4 Amnesty Law for political offences since September 1, 1939.
- 6 Return from exile of Rashid Ali.
- 10 Unsuccessful attempt at price control of fruit and vegetables.
- 12 Release of Colonel Arif from his post as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Iraq Petroleum Company informs Government of its readiness to advance ID. 4 million in final discharge of their 1953 account.
- 15 Communist-nationalist rioting at Nejef. Military Governor's second warning against demonstrations and publication of political pamphlets.
- 22 Censorship extended to all printed material whether imported or produced in Iraq.
- 24 Prime Minister promises plebiscite on a final constitution after transitional period. Iraq recognises "Provisional Algerian Government" set up in Cairo.
- 30 Colonel Arif removed from his posts as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior and appointed Ambassador at Bonn.

#### October

- 1 Agrarian Reform Law. Iraq Government agree to resumption of overflying by British aircraft on trooping flights.
- 6 Return of Mulla Mustafa Barzani.
- 8 Iraq recognises Republic of Guinea.
- 11 Soviet-Iraq Trade Agreement signed.
- 12 Departure of Colonel Arif for Bonn.
- 25-31 Visit of Ruler of Kuwait.
- 25 Kurd-Turcoman disturbances in Kirkuk.
- 26 German Democratic Republic-Iraqi Trade Agreement signed.



## October

- 26 Nationalist-Communist riots on arrival of United Arab Republic Minister of Education.
- 26-31 New Zealand trade delegation visit.
- 28 United Arab Republic-Iraqi Cultural Agreement signed.

## November

- 3 Conclusion of trials for conspiracy against Syria.
- 4 Colonel Arif arrested on his return to Baghdad followed by Communist-led demonstrations.
- 10 Iraqi territorial waters extended by decree to 12 miles.
- 10-19 Sentences in "Syrian Conspiracy" trials announced: death sentences on Generals Rafiq Arif and Ghazi Daghestani, and on Dr. Jamali, Burhanuddin Bashayan and Ahmed Mukhtar Baban.
- 11 Salih Ibn Issa al Harithi, Deputy of the Imam of Oman, visits Baghdad.
- Closure of foreign consulates outside Baghdad and Basra requested by Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 15 Trade, Payments, Economic Co-ordination and Technical Assistance Agreements with United Arab Republic signed.

## November

- 18 Announcement of termination of Khanaqin Oil Company concession to produce oil in Khanaqin field as from November 30.
- 20 Ali Abdul Karim, formerly Sultan of Lahej, arrives in Baghdad.
- Iraq Government recognises new régime in Sudan.
- 25 National Pact proclaimed, setting out aims of National Unity Front of political parties.
- 26 Prime Minister's speech to Arab Lawyers' Conference.
- 29 Trials for "corruption" begin with Abdul Jabbar Fahmi, ex-Mutasarrif of Baghdad.

## December

- 1 Baghdad-Moscow radio-telephone link inaugurated.
- 8 Government announcement of discovery of plot by "corrupt elements and foreigners" to overthrow the Government.
- Rioting in Basra.
- 15 Hostile demonstrations on arrival in Baghdad of Mr. Rountree of United States State Department.
- 29 Rioting in Baghdad between Nationalists and Communists following President Nasser's anti-Communist speech of December 23.

EQ 1015/114

No. 2

# SITUATION IN IRAQ FOLLOWING THE RESIGNATION ON FEBRUARY 7 OF SIX MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received February 23)*

(No. 18. Confidential) *Baghdad, February 19, 1959.*  
Sir,

On February 7, following the resignation of six members of the Iraq Government, it was announced that new Ministers had been appointed to the posts left vacant and also to the Ministries of Education and Development, which had been supervised by other Ministers on an acting basis since the middle of October. I enclose a list of the Ministers who resigned, and another showing the composition of the Government following the new appointments.

2. The Ministers who resigned consisted of four Arabs and two Kurds. The Arabs belonged to the Arab Nationalist wing of the Government; two were members of the old Right-wing Iraqi Nationalist movement, Siddiq Shanshal and Dr. Abdul Jabbar Jomard, the third was the only remaining revolutionary officer in the Cabinet other than Qasim himself, Brigadier Naji Talib, and the fourth, the only surviving Ba'athist, Fuad Rikabi. The two Kurds were also on the Right-wing of the Government, Baba Ali Shaikh Mahmud, the conservative, land-owning Kurdish Nationalist, and Dr. Mohammed Salih Mahmud, formerly an army doctor. The only civilian member of the existing Government with Arab Nationalist views who stayed in office was Mustafa Ali, the Minister of Justice, who does not seem to play any significant political role in the Cabinet. Otherwise, there remained only soldiers and men of the Left.

3. This pattern has been strengthened by the new appointments. These consist, firstly, of four more Army officers, who were either members of the army groups which planned the *coup d'état* of July 14 or were otherwise closely associated with the Prime Minister, and secondly, of four civilians, of whom two, Hussain Jamil and Dr. Talaat al-Shaibani, are or have been members of the National Democratic Party, a third, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hashim Jawad al-Auqati, is a member of the Foreign Service, but with views akin to those of the National Democratic Party, while the fourth, Shaikh

Hassan al-Talabani, is politically neutral. The appointment of Talabani and retired Brigadier Fuad Arif maintains the representation of Kurds in the Cabinet. The old Cabinet was a coalition between the revolutionary officers and representatives of all the political groups (counting Ibrahim Kubba for this purpose as a Communist because of his views, although he may not hold a party card). The new Cabinet is in essence an alliance between the revolutionary officers and the Left parties only. The military element is distinctly stronger than before, both because of its increased representation, because the political element is weakened by being confined to one party, and because that party does not have the strength which good organisation, popular backing and a clear and persuasive programme would give them. The previous Government brought together the different parts of the National Unity Front, the organisation formed by the political parties in October to support the new régime and preserve at least the appearance of national unity. This attempt can now be seen to have failed. The only organised political support in the country to which Qasim could look, if under pressure from the nationalists, would at the moment be that of the Communist Party.

4. This is the first reconstruction of the Government since the removal of Colonel Abdul Salam Arif and Dr. Jabr Umar on October 12, 1958, and it is a much more far-reaching one. The reason prompting the outgoing Ministers to resign was fundamentally the absence of any effective action by the Prime Minister to arrest the growth of Communist influence and to bring the Government back to a position of balance in which it would pay as much attention to the views of the Arab Nationalist elements in the country as to those of the Left. To their previous dislike of increasing Communist influence in the streets, in the Press and radio and in the Popular Resistance Forces, had in the previous month been added their alarm at the propaganda war between Cairo and Baghdad which had been fed by the pro-Communist activity of



Ibrahim Kubba in Baghdad and his anti-Arab Nationalist activities at the Arab League Economic Council meeting in Cairo, and by the political attacks against Cairo in the High Military Tribunal, delivered by its President, Colonel Fadhil Abbas Mahdawi, and the Prosecutor, Colonel Majid Mohammed Amin. Although the suspicions of some at least of the outgoing Ministers that Qasim might himself be in league with the Communists had, to a considerable extent, been allayed by his speech of January 6, reaffirming his policy of neutrality, and by his declaration of January 14 bringing the Popular Resistance Forces under stricter control, the general situation had seemed to them to be continuing to deteriorate, with the result that they were feeling in a more and more false position and more and more helpless to influence events. For the Prime Minister took no active steps to limit Communist influence, which was continuing to increase as was shown by the Left-wing success in the country-wide elections to the Conference of Teachers on January 23 which set up a Teachers' Association, and by the spread of Left-wing sentiments among the students and, it is believed, among some at least of the officer cadets and younger officers in the Army. Meanwhile, despite the go-slow tactics of the Director-General of Labour, the Government finally yielded to Communist pressure for approval for the formation of trade unions and there were indications that similar approval would be given for peasant associations, ostensibly set up to co-operate with the authorities on agrarian reform, but in fact intended by the Communists as a mechanism for extending their influence in the countryside. Finally, nothing was done to restrain Colonel Mahdawi. The discontent of the Nationalists in the Government with this situation accordingly grew. It needed a spark to produce the necessary determination to resign and to ensure that their resignations were accepted by Qasim.

5. This spark was provided by the publication from February 1 onwards of the proceedings of the secret trial of Colonel Abdul Salam Arif. I shall be reporting upon them. Their publication added directly to the discontent of the Nationalist members of the Government. It was a breach of the original understanding that they should be published at all, an understanding which had encouraged the witnesses to speak freely about their relations with Colonel Arif. The evidence of

Brigadier Naji Talib, the Minister of Social Affairs, revealed much sympathy for Colonel Arif, and reflected somewhat adversely on his relations with the Prime Minister. For it showed that the latter was not, as he and his supporters like to claim, the original revolutionary officer from whose leadership the whole movement flowed, and that Brigadier Talib doubted the Prime Minister's word in claiming that Colonel Arif had tried to assassinate him. The proceedings as a whole show Colonel Arif in a relatively good light and probably made the Nationalist Ministers feel that Qasim was much to blame for Arif being in the dock. The evidence, moreover, contained interventions by Colonel Mahdawi which added to their dislike of him.

6. The discontent of the Nationalist Ministers might not have come to the boil if it had not been for Brigadier Naji Talib himself. He had for some months been in bad health following a heart-attack, and had probably decided that he would have to leave the Government anyway. He is said to have presented his resignation on health grounds a couple of months ago, but not to have pressed it. He was one of the senior revolutionary officers, probably at one time a potential leader, and he clearly disapproved of the way in which Colonel Arif had been dealt with. He is known to have been bitterly opposed to Colonel Mahdawi because of the latter's open encouragement of the execution of members of the old régime. He is a strong Arab Nationalist. In presenting his resignation in a Cabinet meeting on February 1, he did not hesitate to accuse the Prime Minister of having betrayed the ideal of the revolutionary movement by permitting a split to occur in the country and by neglecting the claims of the Arab Nationalists to a fair hearing. His attack is said to have caused the Prime Minister to break down, and his action no doubt encouraged the other Ministers to follow him. Dr. Jomard, Dr. Mohammed Salih Mahmud and Baba Ali put in their resignations and were followed some days later by Siddiq Shanshal and Fuad Rikabi.

7. Siddiq Shanshal and Fuad Rikabi had sought to resign on previous occasions and had not been allowed to do so by the Prime Minister. It is said that this time also he tried to persuade the resigning Ministers to stay in office. Having been given courage by Brigadier Naji Talib, they insisted on going. In the course of the week, pressure was probably put upon Qasim by the

Communists to agree. At any rate, this was broadly hinted in the editorials of the Communist Press which made a clear demand that "the leaders of the revolution should remove from the revolution's path without hesitation all obstructors, discouraging and suspicious men," and that more Left-wing Ministers as well as "faithful army officers" should be appointed. Indeed, they seemed to be asking that Communists should be represented in the new appointments. The Prime Minister must have reached the conclusion that he could not give sufficient reassurances about the future to satisfy the Nationalist Ministers either that Colonel Mahdawi and the forces of the Left would be tamed or that genuine peace would be made with Cairo, and he may have calculated that the Government could be conducted more efficiently by a coalition of army officers and one party, than by a body containing all the warring factions. He finally accepted the resignations on February 7 and made the new appointments referred to earlier in this despatch.

8. In view of the apparent continuation of the Prime Minister's domination over the Government, it may be said that the change in the personnel of the Ministers is not of overwhelming importance. This is largely true. The main political forces at work in the country, pan-Arab nationalism and Communism, will continue to exert pressure upon the Prime Minister through all available channels regardless of the composition of the Government. His own personal decisions are therefore still cardinal. On the other hand, the presence of more Left-wing Ministers in the Government may be of some consequence in determining the rate at which Communists can infiltrate into positions in the Government Departments. Since there is no general Government policy on this question, the personality of the individual Minister is decisive for his own Department. There has, for example, been a noticeable difference between the Ministries of Finance under Mohammed Hadid and Economics under Ibrahim Kubba; the former appears to have resisted the infiltration of Communists, the latter to have encouraged it. This is not only a matter of the Minister's views, but also of his political strength. Dr. Jomard, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been politically strong enough successfully to resist all proposals to appoint Communists either in his Ministry or in missions abroad. There is some fear that his successor, Hashim Jawad, a Foreign Service

official, will be less able to do this. What is perhaps of even more importance is whether infiltration can also go further in the Army. One of the new Ministers, Brigadier Muhiddin Abdul Hamid, has been General Officer Commanding the Fourth (Armoured) Division. The nomination of his successor will therefore be of considerable interest. The Communists have for a long time now been conducting a campaign against the other divisional commanders, and particularly Brigadier Abdul Aziz al Uqaili (First Division) and Brigadier Nadhim Tabaqchali (Second Division), and there were rumours at the time of the change of Government that they were to be replaced, which probably reflected Communist pressure. The removal of these senior officers or of others such as the Chief of the General Staff, Brigadier Ahmed Salih al-Abdi, who are not only loyal to Qasim but anti-Communist, would be a matter for the gravest concern.

9. By accepting the appointment of additional members to the Government, the National Democratic Party took a considerable risk which, the Minister of Finance told me, was not palatable to Kamil Chaderchi. They are fundamentally a party of leaders without a following and their views range over a wide spectrum to the left of centre. That the Prime Minister had delegated no more authority to them than to their predecessors was shown immediately after the new Ministers took office by his cancelling the action taken by Hussain Jamil, the new Minister of Guidance, when he suspended the Communist Party organ for a fortnight for ignoring a censorship instruction. This incident showed both the continuing strength of Communist influence and the reluctance of the Prime Minister to assert himself against it. The party thus found itself in a highly exposed position without real authority but liable to be held responsible for trends of policy which it considered distasteful; this would be very clear if Qasim should confirm some of the death sentences. It made the party vulnerable to pressures and there was bound to be a danger that when these were exerted, it would disintegrate into sub-groups which would move Left or Right. That the dominant pressures still came from the Communists was shown by the Hussain Jamil incident referred to above; and it was because of this that the party took it so seriously. Hussain Jamil himself resigned and it is doubtful if he can be persuaded to return to office. Muhammed Hadid and Hudaib al Haj Hamud, the Ministers of



Finance and Agriculture, although they seem to have regretted that Hussain Jamil took the action that he did, decided to support him as a fellow-member of the party by at least indicating an intention to follow him. It is not yet clear whether Hadid and Hamud will carry out their intention, and it may take them a considerable time to make up their minds, depending on whether any satisfaction can be given to Jamil over the Ittihad al Shaab affair. Their dilemma is a real one. If they stay, they accept that their party has responsibility but no power. If they go, they fear that their departure will hasten either the introduction of an outright military dictatorship which will make impossible the political party life which is the basis of their political creed or a slide into Communism. They seem to fear the former more than the latter.

10. The weakness of the political base of the new Government, the lack of authority of the civilian Ministers as shown by the Hussain Jamil incident, the lack of experience of the army officers, the continued pressures of the Communists working through the High Military Court, the Press and professional bodies like the new Teachers' Association, and brought to bear on the Prime Minister through his military entourage, inevitably mean that the situation continues to be highly unstable. There is nothing about the new Government which gives it the appearance of great strength and durability. The National Democrats seem likely to be right in believing that if there is to be a change, there are two directions in which it might develop. Either there might be a move further to the Left in which the more moderate Ministers would disappear and more extreme ones be appointed, or there might be a move away from civil government altogether and the appointment of a Council of Revolutionary Officers on the Egyptian model. This idea was discussed before July 14 and, as was revealed in evidence during Colonel Arif's trial, was the solution favoured by some of the conspirators. It has been under consideration at intervals ever since. At first, Colonel Arif opposed it. When he turned round and supported it, the Communists are said to have come out against it, since its adoption would have made it more difficult for them to infiltrate the Ministries or to exert effective pressure on the Prime Minister. It can be assumed that they are still opposed to it since the senior officers likely to be appointed are mostly not Com-

munists, and it is likely that they are playing their part in trying to keep the National Democrats in office. It is one of the odd features of the Hussain Jamil crisis that it was the editor of the Communist Party organ, a member of the Central Committee of the party, who precipitated it and made the continued presence of the National Democrats in the Government less likely. This is perhaps one more sign that the Communists, by pressing too hard, tend to damage their own interests by alarming the moderates.

11. If the National Democratic Ministers should all eventually resign, it will mean that the Prime Minister has been abandoned by all the experienced politicians of the pre-revolution opposition parties. He will have been left alone between the only two organised forces in the country, the army and the Communists. Iraq is not a country which readily produces leaders and there is no sign yet of a leader emerging from the army who would stand openly for Iraq Nationalism against the Communists. Indeed, if one did emerge openly, he would inevitably be removed by Qasim. This situation drives the opposition into conspiracy and leaders can only be identified if their conspiracies succeed. There are probably conspirators plotting against Qasim to-day and they are almost certain to enquire of Nasser if he will support them. He may be more cautious now than on the last occasion about participating in a plot. However, whether he does or not, it cannot be taken as at all certain that a new régime arising from a successful plot would accept union with the United Arab Republic. The opposition to this is far too widely spread in Iraq to make union at all likely in the early stages of a new régime. Meanwhile, the fact that conspiracies continue pushes Qasim towards the Communists. The course of events still continues to favour them in the long run.

12. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Ankara, Amman, Beirut, Karachi, Moscow, Tehran, Washington, Kuwait and Bahrain, to the Political Office, Middle East Forces, to the Commander, British Forces in the Arabian Peninsula, to the United Kingdom Delegation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Basra.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

# Enclosure

*Ministers who resigned, February 1959*  
*Foreign Affairs:* Dr. Abdul Jabbar Jomard.  
*Social Affairs:* Brigadier Naji Talib.  
*Guidance:* Siddiq Shanshal.  
*Health:* Major Mohammed Saleh Mahmud.  
*Communications:* Baba Ali Shaikh Mahmud.  
*Without Portfolio:* Fuad Rikabi.

## Composition of new Iraq Government February 7, 1959

*Prime Minister:* Major-General Abdul Karim Qasim.  
*Interior:* Brigadier Ahmed Yahya.

*Finance:* Mohammed Hadid.\*  
*Economics:* Dr. Ibrahim Kubba.  
*Foreign Affairs:* Hashim Jawad.\*†  
*Agriculture:* Hudaib al Haj Hamud.†  
*Education:* Brigadier Muhiddin Abdul Hamid.\*  
*Social Affairs:* Brigadier Abdul Wahab Amin.\*  
*Guidance:* Hussain Jamil.\*†  
*Health:* Major-General Dr. Mohammed al-Shawwaf.\*  
*Development:* Dr. Jala'at al-Shaibani.\*†  
*Justice:* Mustafa Ali.  
*Communications and Works:* Shaikh Hassan al-Talabani.\*  
*State:* Brigadier (retd.) Fuad Arif.\*

\* New appointment.

† Member of, or connected with, National Democratic Party.



EQ 1015/222

No. 3

## REVOLT IN MOSUL

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received March 23)*(No. 32. Confidential)  
Sir,*Baghdad,  
March 19, 1959.*

Some time during the afternoon of Saturday, the 7th of March, Colonel Abdul Wahab Al Shawwaf, the Commander of the 5th Brigade of the Iraq Army stationed in Mosul, raised a revolt against the Government of Major-General Abdul Karim Qasim. The exact course of events during the 7th of March is still somewhat obscure but the general outline of what occurred is known. I enclose a detailed narrative which may require amendment.<sup>(1)</sup>

2. The revolt seems to have been touched off by the Peace Partisan rally held in Mosul on the 6th of March which was attended by several thousand Communist youths sent by special train from Baghdad, and which had been arranged either to intimidate the Nationalist movement in the city or, possibly, to provoke it into some act of disaffection to the Government. Mosul was known to have been an active centre of the Nationalists where the Communists were not, as elsewhere in the country, extending their influence, and where the responsible officials and senior Army officers were favourable to the Nationalist cause. There had been rioting between Nationalists and Communists during the past few weeks at which the Nationalists seem to have come off best and for a week before the revolt the Communist newspapers in Baghdad had been conducting a campaign for purging the administration in Mosul. It is probable that the revolt was intended to be part of a larger rebellion against the Government involving other centres and possibly Baghdad. But the other Army units remained loyal and there was no rising elsewhere.

3. The motives of Colonel Shawwaf and his supporters were probably mixed. The revolt appears to have been partly inspired by hatred of Communism, partly by Arab Nationalist feeling and partly, in the case of Shawwaf's tribal supporters, by opposition to the Iraq Government's measures against landowners and the tribes. The broadcasts

of the transmitter which was erected in Mosul on the 8th of March mainly called for a return to the principles of the revolution of the 14th of July with an emphasis on freedom from internal dictatorship, foreign control, and hired traitors, coupled with attacks on General Qasim and his entourage. In these attacks, although we did not hear the Communist Party mentioned by name, Abdul Qadir Ismail, the Communist editor of the party newspaper in Baghdad, and Colonel Taha Shaikh Ahmad, the suspected Communist Director of Plans, were among those singled out. The implication was clear that the "traitors" were "hired" by the Communists. Qasim was also described as relying on a group with a specific political ideology. So far as we know the rebel radio did not come out openly in favour of union with the United Arab Republic. Nevertheless there was at least a measure of United Arab Republic complicity with the rebels. There is reliable evidence that the Mosul transmitter was provided by the Syrian Army and was in the charge of a Syrian Army captain. The propaganda support given to the rebels by the United Arab Republic broadcasts, including apparently the transmission of the rebel statements after their radio had been put out of action by air attack, quickly persuaded the Iraq Government that this was a plot inspired by the United Arab Republic. I enclose a statement<sup>(1)</sup> given on the 17th of March to a Press correspondent by the Iraqi Foreign Minister which makes this clear. Although the Communist Press has done its best to indicate Anglo-American complicity in the plot, the Foreign Minister has denied to me and others that the Iraq Government has any information to this effect.

4. During the short period in which Colonel Shawwaf was in active rebellion, he seems to have accomplished very little. He arrested many Peace Partisans and Army officers who supported the Government against him, some of whom were killed in prison, he sponsored the radio announcements over the so-called Mosul radio

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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station and he issued to the mob arms released from the brigade's ammunition store and probably also from supplies smuggled over the Syrian border. He may have summoned into Mosul some of the Shammar tribesmen from the direction of the Syrian border to help his adherents suppress the supporters of the Government. Shawwaf's single planned offensive military action appears to have been the abortive attempt to bomb the transmitting station at Abu Ghuraib in the early morning of the 9th of March. Otherwise, he seems to have stayed inactive until the strike by aircraft of the Iraqi Air Force early on the morning of the 9th of March which damaged his headquarters, probably wounded him and induced some of his men to change sides, kill him and bring the revolt effectively to an end. While he was sitting in his headquarters, the mob was at large in the town with their weapons and, according to hearsay evidence, attacking Government supporters including many of the local Christians and possibly some church property. In this short period, the revolt may have spread to a few of the neighbouring localities. There have been reports of a rising in Aqra, to the north-east of the town, and for a short time a rebel army detachment held the Mosul Petroleum Company oilfield at Ain Zala, until a junior officer killed his superiors and took over on behalf of the Government. Although there have been indications that Colonel Shawwaf expected complementary action to be taken in Baghdad and Kirkuk (his radio broadcasts denounced as a fabrication the message of support for the Government sent by Brigadier Nadhim Tabaqchali, then General Officer Commanding of the 2nd Division at Kirkuk) no other rising occurred. The Government have claimed that the Army unit at Erbil remained loyal and advanced against the rebels and there is evidence that some of the mountain Kurds, possibly from the Barzan territory, came to Mosul with a view to resisting the Shammar tribesmen. Baghdad itself remained entirely quiet and indeed the Government showed absolutely no signs of nervousness about the situation there, no extra guards being mounted at key-points in the city or even over the radio station. Government supporters demonstrated in force at Basra, in Baghdad and probably in many other towns. With Colonel Shawwaf's death on the morning of the 9th of March, the revolt as such was over, but it was two days before any semblance of order was restored to the

town of Mosul. Government adherents, probably led by local Communists, embarked on a systematic destruction and looting of the property and lives of known rebel supporters, particularly among the rich middle-class and tribal leaders. For a time on the 9th of March, a pocket of resistance held out in the town house of Sheikh Ahmed Ajil Al Yawar, the paramount Sheikh of the Iraqi branch of the Shammar tribe, but this was reduced, it is believed with considerable slaughter, late that night or early the following day. Whether Sheikh Ahmed Ajil was himself killed or managed to escape to Syria is not yet definitely known. Gangs led by armed soldiers went round the town with lists of houses to be dealt with and British on-lookers who were there at the time and have since come to Baghdad, have reported that they could never have imagined that looting could be so thorough. Estimates of casualties have varied widely. The Foreign Minister has said that they can be counted in hundreds rather than thousands. Experienced journalists have estimated them at something like 500; others say that 1,500-2,000 is more likely. Rumours refer to figures of the order of 5,000. It was not till about the 14th of March that all firing had stopped in the town, but thereafter visitors found Mosul under complete and firm Army control, with order restored, shops and businesses reopening, the Popular Resistance Forces and other civilians being disarmed and the place being generally cleaned up. It is doubtful, however, whether order has even now been completely restored in the tribal area to the west. British staff in Ain Zala report that inhabitants of the nearby villages were until recently still frightened of the incursions of tribesmen hiding in the hills. The unrest seems to have spread southward to the area of the Dulaim tribes round the Euphrates, and there was rioting in the town of Ramadi on the 14th of March in which a Communist centre was attacked. For a time the Army units at Habbaniya itself were alerted and the Ministry of Defence expressed some doubt as to whether visitors should go down there from Baghdad. However, for the present anxiety seems to have lifted and the situation is fairly peaceful.

5. All reports confirm that throughout the rising and its aftermath, there were no deliberate attacks on foreigners. It is obvious that Colonel Shawwaf had no interest in antagonising any foreign Power and it is probable that the Communists in

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their reprisals were equally anxious to avoid anything which might conceivably lead to the fear of foreign intervention. I am still awaiting permission for a member of the Baghdad Consular staff to visit Mosul but reports that I have had from British people who have arrived from Mosul and also telephone conversations held between British firms in Baghdad and their local representatives show that the British subjects in Mosul, numbering something over a dozen, have not been molested. A representative from the Iraq Petroleum Company headquarters in Baghdad has been able to visit Ain Zala and has brought back the same report. Conditions there had been anxious, but the young Army officer who took command there in the course of the 8th of March on behalf of the Government managed to secure the co-operation of the workers' representatives and to maintain some form of order. In Baghdad, there has been no sign of feeling against non-Arab foreigners.

6. Whether or not Colonel Shawwaf had any intention, if his revolt had succeeded, to unite Iraq with the United Arab Republic, the help given to him by the United Arab Republic, the support accorded by United Arab Republic propaganda, and the speeches condemning Qasim made by President Nasser in the following days, all put a pro-United Arab Republic colour on the revolt. The Government, in their statements on the revolt, particularly that made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the violent attacks against Nasser in the Communist Press, and in the Court, for his alleged attempt to extend the United Arab Republic to Iraq and to impose a dictatorial rule in the place of rule by "the people," have all added to this impression.

7. The consequence has been to intensify opposition to the Arab Nationalists and particularly the Ba'athists. Ten members of the Embassy of the United Arab Republic have been expelled from Iraq, a number of Ba'athists have been beaten up, there have been a large number of arrests, and there

are signs of a further purge of the Civil Service and perhaps also of the Army. Communist pressure has been publicly exercised in favour of the executions of those condemned to death by the Military Court, a widespread purge of the Civil Service, the arming of "the people," i.e., the Popular Resistance Forces, and the speedy withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact. Bands of demonstrators hanging Nasser in effigy were in control of the Baghdad streets for several days and vulgar pictures of Nasser are pasted up all over Baghdad. Workers in factories or engaged in construction are gaining increasing control of the operations of the firms concerned and the students' associations are becoming more and more powerful in the colleges. Neither the Army nor the Police show any disposition to interfere in the activities of "the people," who are presumably kept under relative discipline only by the organisation of the Communist Party. The Nationalist Press has had its machines smashed and is not appearing. Only the National Democrat Party's newspaper, probably under the influence of the Minister of Finance, is making a courageous stand in favour of moderation and stricter control of the increasing activities of the Popular Resistance Forces. It is too early yet to assess these developments as the situation is changing rapidly and it is difficult to get reliable facts. But anxiety among the middle class Iraqis is now great and although there have only been a few incidents involving the foreign community, the apparent increasing lack of control by the Iraq Government must give cause for some anxiety.

8. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's representatives at Ankara, Amman, Beirut, Karachi, Moscow, Tehran, Washington, Kuwait, Bahrain, P.O.M.E.F. and the United Kingdom Delegation to NATO.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

EQ 1015/239

No. 4

# DETERIORATION IN THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN IRAQ AFTER THE ABORTIVE MOSUL REVOLT

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received March 30)*

(No. 36. Confidential) *Baghdad,*  
Sir, *March 26, 1959.*

In my despatch No. 32 of the 19th of March I described the course of the Mosul revolt and its immediate consequences. The situation remains fluid. There is little doubt that there have been a large number of arrests. The prisons are full and detainees are being sent as far afield as Kut and Amara. Some of the people arrested are released after interrogation and the Prime Minister has said that nothing should then be held against them. We have no definite information of any former Ministers being arrested. Fuad Riqabi, the Ba'athist, is said to be in hiding and on the run. We do not know what has happened to Abdul Jabbar Jomard, whose house was among those attacked after the rebellion, as a rebel depot. The Public Prosecutor in the Special Military Court trying the Mosul rebels has asked for Brigadier Naji Talib's arrest. The connexion, if any, of many of those arrested in the Mosul plot has not been revealed. Undoubtedly the opportunity has been taken to pay off old scores. There is great anxiety among moderate Iraqis who are more careful than ever in their contacts with foreigners. One of the old régime whom I met casually in a public place said "This is 1984." Those arrested appear to be men of known Nationalist sympathies including a number of professors and 15 officials of the Development Board, some of whom, however, have since been returned. We have no evidence of a further extensive purge in Government offices apart from the arrests of suspected Nationalists, but the Governor of the Central Bank, Abdul Illah Hafidh, and the Director of Exchange Control, Dr. Saleh Kubba, both well known to the British, who had retained their posts after the revolution, have been at least temporarily replaced.

2. In the colleges students' committees have been playing a steadily growing part in the control of affairs and in some cases have been doing their best to get Nationalist members of the staff removed. Immediately after the revolt, persecution was extended

to students of other Arab countries and most of the students from Tunis, Morocco, Sudan, Jordan, Libya and Bahrain wanted to leave. They were all eventually persuaded to stay, except the Bahrainis, who left last week. The Bahrainis maintained that they were in danger of their lives because they were non-Iraqi and anti-Communist and it was impossible for them to continue to study in an atmosphere of intimidation. They said that students were setting up "trials" of anti-Communist students and beating up those accused.

3. In the army the two divisional commanders of known anti-Communist sympathy, Brigadiers Nadim Tabaqchali and Abdul Aziz Uqaili, have been replaced. Although Uqaili is just about to take up his post as Iraqi Ambassador in Tehran, the Public Prosecutor in the rebel trial has asked for his arrest also. The Public Prosecutor also mentioned that the rebels had got in touch with Tabaqchali and suggested his direct implication in the plot. Discipline in the army still appears to be good. Qasim can probably count on supporters throughout the army, though there seems little doubt that a number of senior officers disagree with his policy. One of them, in conversation with me recently, compared the situation to that described in "Dr. Zhivago." In the junior ranks, the majority are probably loyal to Qasim at the moment, including an increasing Communist element, though the numbers of the old supporters of Abdul Salam Arif who retain their basic Arab-Nationalist opinions are probably not negligible. But any assessment of opinion in the army must be, in the main, guesswork.

4. There has been no serious labour trouble, but employers have to allow the workers off to take part in the numerous demonstrations. Industrial discipline is doubtful and when an incident occurs, the security forces do not interfere against the workers. On the Basra power station project removal of a photograph of a Baghdad demonstration led to a serious threat to the safety of a German worker. In Baghdad the Iraqi workers of a shoe



factory one morning expelled all the foreign workers. This week the German foremen on a construction project in Baghdad refused to give leave to the workers to take part in a demonstration and were in some danger until they were removed by the police in protective custody.

5. There have been numerous demonstrations in the streets, probably organised by the Communist Party, but they have been good humoured and there has been no sign of anti-foreign feeling. No Nationalist newspapers are appearing since the Nationalist presses were sabotaged after the Mosul revolt. Only one newspaper, *Al Ahali*, the organ of the National Democratic Party, dares to deviate from the Communist Party line. Even this newspaper has become more circumspect in the last few days. When the situation really got out of hand in Mosul, the army acted effectively and disarmed even the Popular Resistance Forces. But normally, in accordance with the current political line, no action is taken by authority against manifestations of "the people."

6. The Communist Party have made five demands of Qasim: purges, arrests, arming of the Popular Resistance Forces, withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact and executions. Qasim has withdrawn from the Baghdad Pact. He knew that this would be a popular move and would deprive Nasser of one method of attacking him. The arrests were in any case to be expected after the Mosul plot from a simple desire for self-preservation. Purges were already extensive. We have no evidence of any new major purge apart from the arrests of Nationalists in connexion with the plot. The Popular Resistance Forces, who are more active now at night, are not entirely without arms since they shot at the car of the Secretary of the Belgian Embassy outside my house a few nights ago, but it does not appear that arms have been widely distributed to them. One unconfirmed report is that the arms are in their depots ready for distribution in an emergency. This may quite likely be true. There have as yet been no executions although there are rumours that three condemned persons who were responsible for internal security under the old régime are to be selected for execution. The action taken by Qasim so far on the Communists' demands is not, in my opinion, convincing evidence of a surrender to Communist demands. The

action is what one would expect him to take in any case. The important question is the executions. On this the next few weeks may be crucial. Meanwhile the statements of Qasim and of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to myself and to my Western and neutral colleagues still reflect the policy of neutralism and there are some members of the Government who seem to be genuinely trying to carry out a policy of balancing East and West. On the other hand, the Minister of Economics is doing all he can to supplant Western by Eastern connexions and the President and Prosecutor of the Military Court, who appear to be Government spokesmen to the Iraqi people, continue to show a strong anti-Western bias.

7. The Mosul revolt has naturally created many problems for the Iraq Petroleum Company. About 20 of their Iraqi employees, including the senior Iraqi in the company's service who was manager of the Mosul oilfields, have been arrested. Labour at the Mosul oilfields after the revolt was virtually in charge, but reinforcements were sent in by the army and conditions there are now improving. There have been attempts by the Communist Press to utilise the Mosul revolt to launch an attack on the company. However, the Government has not taken part in this. The reference to the company in the Prime Minister's recent Press conference was relatively favourable. The company appear to have the effective support of the army and it seems probable that the Government will not allow any disturbance of the company's operations which will affect oil production.

8. Qasim seems to rest his position mainly on his personal popularity with the masses and the students, on his supporters in the army and on the Communists. A large section of the non-Communist educated Iraqis who supported the revolution, even including some National Democrats, seem to have lost faith in Qasim's ability to rule the country. However, there are naturally plenty who, whatever they privately think, have jumped on the bandwagon for personal reasons. Some Nationalists cling to the hope that the alienation of moderate opinion from Qasim will lead to his fall in a matter of months, but the moderates are totally unorganised and the resistance of the active opposition must have been severely affected

by the failure of the Mosul plot and the large number of recent arrests. With security precautions tightened, the chances of another plot in the near future are problematical, whatever Nasser's efforts to revenge his recent rebuff and the insults daily heaped on him here. The Nationalists are distressed that the Shawwaf plot was so premature and inefficiently organised. They feel that, like Arif's impetuosity in the early days after the revolution, it has proved a severe if temporary setback to their hopes of establishing an Iraq in harmony with Arab Nationalism and untainted by the influence of either of the big Power blocs. It is not certain that the Communists will be able to defeat the Nationalists in the long run. Their chances of doing so will, however, be improved if Nasser plays into their hands by pushing too hard and sponsoring or supporting further unsuccessful plots.

9. There can be no question that our policy must be one of non-intervention as outlined in paragraphs 2 and 3 of your

telegram No. 1543 to Washington. We have many interests to protect in Iraq which would be prejudiced and might be endangered if we were now to take action which would make it appear to the Iraqis that we were turning our back on them. We must still reserve judgment until we see the outcome of the present struggle in Iraq and the Arab world. In the meanwhile, we should, I submit, continue to do business with the Iraqis and seek to defend and promote British economic and commercial interests in Iraq, whatever the changes and chances of Iraqi politics and revolutions.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Kuwait, Karachi, Moscow, Tehran, Washington, to the Political Office, Middle East Forces, and the United Kingdom Delegation to NATO.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

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HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.



EQ 1533/28

No. 5

**RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE,  
MINISTER OF STATE (Mr. PROFUMO) AND LORD MONCKTON,  
APRIL 27, 1959**

**Account of Lord Monckton's Visit to Iraq**

**Press in the United Kingdom**

The Secretary of State asked Lord Monckton whether it would be possible for him to call a high-powered group of British Press leaders and convince them that their exaggerated and unfounded reports on the situation in Iraq and the I.P.C. negotiations were doing great harm and amounted to deliberately chucking our assets away. Lord Monckton explained that he had spoken to the Press before leaving Baghdad, in an effort to keep them on the right lines. I.P.C. were seeing what they could do about the reports in the Press of April 27 and he would certainly consider the Secretary of State's suggestion that he himself should act.

**Situation in Iraq**

Lord Monckton said that he had found Qasim agreeable and restrained on all matters except the supply of arms, where he had shown some emotion. Lord Monckton did not think he was a Communist but rather that he was very afraid for his own position. He therefore had to rely on the Communists for support and Lord Monckton was beginning to wonder if even the army would be able to hold the situation. He had found a very excitable atmosphere in Baghdad, partly because his visit had coincided with the Peace Rally and the arrival of Kurds from Russia, and there was no doubt that the mob were wild supporters of Qasim. The armed Popular Resistance Forces had been very noticeable.

Kubba had given the impression of being rough and uncouth and almost certainly a Communist. During the discussion with the Prime Minister he had, however, left almost all the talking to Qasim and had been rather quiet on that occasion. Mahomet Hadib had struck him as being very nice and moderate.

He had found the morale of the I.P.C. European staff reasonably good considering the difficult conditions, especially in the north. Some wives had still preferred to remain, although most of those with children had returned to the United Kingdom. He had found the position in Basra, where contracting firms had had serious labour troubles, most uncomfortable.

There was a fundamental staffing difficulty for I.P.C. The European staff were being depleted and the Iraq Government were urging the I.P.C. to bring in Iraqi staff; the Iraqi staff thus promoted from the lower "monthly rate" levels were, however, seriously intimidated by arrest or threat of arrest and therefore very little use as replacements for the Europeans. I.P.C. were also taking on much more unskilled labour than was really necessary, because of unemployment in other industries.

**I.P.C. Negotiations**

Lord Monckton explained that he had not gone out to Iraq for serious negotiation, but simply to see and encourage the I.P.C. staff. He had explained this to the Press and Kubba had also just announced it in his statement of April 26. Qasim had appeared during his talk to have two points on which he was particularly keen: first, the idea of a new pipeline from Kirkuk to Basra and, secondly, the appointment of an Executive Director. As regards the first, he had felt bound to say that I.P.C. would consider the matter. As regards the second, he had made it clear to Qasim that it would be out of the question to appoint an Iraqi Director on the Board if he were not under the Managing Director, but he had undertaken to consider the possibility of making the existing post of Government Director more active and this was now being considered.

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On relinquishment, there had been a difference of opinion between Qasim and Kubba. Kubba said that the Company must be content with keeping just enough territory for present production. When Lord Monckton had said that this seemed niggardly in view of I.P.C.'s large future investment programme, Qasim had ruled that the I.P.C. should keep what they themselves thought they would require in the foreseeable future. The matter was left there. There was no discussion on refineries or marketing, or other detailed points.

Lord Monckton said he would like to see the Company do something to help Qasim maintain his position, but that that was not possible if the Iraq Government machine was not prepared to see that conditions were such as to make normal working feasible. He had asked Qasim to make a public statement of Government support for the I.P.C. but this had not yet been made, and what Kubba had said on April 26 would not have the same effect in Iraq as a statement by Qasim. There was to be an I.P.C. Board Meeting on April 28, and Mr. Herridge the Managing Director would go out again to Iraq next week to see what could be done. Lord Monckton had the impression that the Board would be afraid that if we gave a little now, we would gradually be asked for more and more.

The Secretary of State thought that proper working conditions should be made a condition for any concessions which I.P.C. might make. He asked what Lord Monckton thought of Her Majesty's Ambassador's suggestion that the time had come for a thoroughgoing negotiation with the I.P.C. on all outstanding points and that Lord Monckton himself was the right man to carry out such negotiations. Lord Monckton said he did not think that the constituent companies would be prepared to give him the full powers which he would require to undertake this himself, anyhow at this stage and until more progress had been made in the routine negotiations. But he would very much like to undertake the task himself if it became possible.

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EQ 1015/292

No. 6

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 28)*(No. 428. Confidential)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
April 27, 1959.

The picture on my return is one of increasing Communist pressure which Qasim seems to be resisting to some extent. The reorganisation of the Government has been postponed. Qasim has not yet agreed to the proposed appointment of two Communists which is being advocated by the near-Communist Press but may have been proposed on [group undecipherable] grounds by the National Democrats. The Minister for Foreign Affairs is still defending his department from infiltration by the Communists, though a number of members of the Services have been newly retired. The Communists are keeping up the emotional temperature by organising a continuous series of demonstrations and are consolidating their hold on the trades unions. But there are indications that they may have been pressing a little too hard and there is said to be controversy on tactics within the party. We have also heard that there is a difference of opinion among the National Democrats whether to work to some extent with the Communists or to oppose them all round.

2. The National Democrats have been discussing with the Communists the choice of a mediator between Qasim and Nasser. The Communists have refused to have an Arab, Tito or Nehru (particularly after Tibet) and the Democrats have now suggested Sukarno. The consistent Communist line here has been to oppose mediation and it seems doubtful whether these discussions will come to anything. I understand that the Algerians are highly embarrassed by the quarrel, finding it impossible to mediate since they are clients of both sides.

3. The best chance of holding the position so gravely weakened by the Mosul revolt seems to be for Western Governments to show forthwith that they will support him if he keeps an independent position and for every effort to be made to achieve a *détente* between Qasim and N . . . there are provocations on both sides. N . . . is probably arming Shammar and organising infiltration and unrest in north-west Iraq. The Iraqis have doubtless got their agents in Syria. Both sides are still conducting extreme propaganda attacks on the radio. But the chief responsibility seems to lie on N . . . who, having been misinformed after the revolution of the strength of opinion in Iraq in favour of union with the U.A.R., has since been promoting and supporting badly organised and unsuccessful plot against Qasim. A senior Foreign Office official said "If N . . . does not stop we shall be Communist in a year".

4. My immediately following telegram contains some suggestions for further action in Iraq and in Egypt.

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EQ 1015/294

No. 7

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 29)*(No. 443. Secret)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
April 28, 1959.

My telegram No. 428: Iraq Situation.

We have now been able to [? group omitted] hold of a list of army officers retiring since the Mosul revolt. It numbers about 200 and includes 16 brigadiers, 60 colonels and 40 lieutenant-colonels, drawn from all formations. Apart from the serious effect which this will have had on the army as a fighting force and on its internal discipline, we must assume the army has lost much of its power to put pressure on Qasim or move against him. At the same time, Qasim's [groups undecipherable ? popularity with all] ranks continues to be built up. In the new circumstances, the advantages of our arms offer must rest not so much on the possibility of encouraging the army to urge Qasim to keep in a central position, as on the encouragement it will give to Qasim with his strong popular support, in the army and outside it, not to submit completely to the Communists. I have discussed our intentions in strict confidence with my Baghdad Pact colleagues, who all agree that it is the right course to pursue.

2. Communist newspapers are again pressing for the inclusion of Communists in the Government. The Minister for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that the National Democrats' policy would probably be to organise a national front with the Communists and perhaps agree to their having one or two members in the Government, although in the less important departments. I pointed out the danger of these tactics. He replied he was aware of it, but the National Democrat Party considered they would gain from this line, *vis-à-vis* the Communists.

3. The Foreign Minister said that if Nasser would stop his attacks on Iraq, Iraq would reciprocate. He would then be prepared to talk to the Egyptians himself. The Iraq Government had no desire to remain out of harmony with other Arab States.

4. On instructions from Ankara, my Turkish colleague is to inform the Prime Minister about the 700 Iraqi Kurds who have taken refuge in Turkey.

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EQ 10338/15

No. 8

## SOVIET-IRAQI ECONOMIC AGREEMENT

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received May 2)*

(No. 53 E. Confidential)

Sir,

Baghdad,

April 29, 1959.

On the 16th of March, 1959, the Governments of Iraq and the Soviet Union concluded in Moscow an Agreement for Economic and Technical Co-operation. The preliminary discussions leading up to the agreement took place in Iraq and were followed by negotiations in Moscow from the 25th of February to the 16th of March, with an Iraqi delegation led by Dr. Ibrahim Kubba, the Minister of Economics and Dr. Tala'at Shaibani, Minister of Development. The text of the agreement, of which I enclose a translation, was published here on the 31st of March. It was announced on the 16th of April that instruments of ratification had been exchanged and that the agreement had as from that date entered into effect.

2. Under the terms of the agreement the Government of the Soviet Union have agreed to help develop the Iraqi economy by providing economic and technical assistance for industry, agriculture, communications, irrigation and geological survey. The agreement and the exchange of letters which goes with it provides for three main categories of aid. The first consists of 25 projects (listed in Supplement No. 1 to the agreement) which it has been agreed in principle shall be carried out in Iraq with Soviet aid. Eighteen of these are the installation of complete plants or experimental establishments. The remaining seven are limited at this stage to survey, research and design work and planning. The complete plants and establishments include a few heavy industries (a steel mill using scrap, a fertilizer factory, a sulphuric acid plant) and several light industries (pharmaceuticals, light agricultural implements, small and medium-sized electrical equipment, textiles and ready-made clothing, glassware and a canning factory) as well as a geological laboratory, experimental agricultural establishments, small tractor stations and silos. For these plants and establishments the Soviet Union will do the survey and design work, provide machinery and lend assistance in building factories and in installing the equipment. They will also train Iraqis to operate the plants. The Iraqis will be responsible for the organisation of building work, and the provision of labour and materials. Except for the salaries of Soviet experts which will be paid for separately, the Soviet assistance will be paid for from a loan or line of credit to a value of 550 million roubles (stated to be equivalent to ID50 million) which the Soviet Union has agreed to make available to the Government of Iraq. This loan will run for a period of seven years and will carry interest at 2½ per cent per annum. The amount drawn against the loan for each project will be repaid in 12 annual instalments of which the first will fall due one year after delivery of the equipment for that project has been completed. Repayment is to be made in dinars into a special account at the Central Bank of Iraq in the name of the Soviet Union and the dinar equivalent will be calculated by reference to the comparative gold value of the dinar and the rouble on the day of repayment. The funds in the special account may be used by the Soviet Union to purchase Iraqi goods or may be transferred into any mutually acceptable convertible currency.

3. The other seven projects in Supplement No. 1 to the agreement include geological survey work, the preparation of plans for improved use of the Tigris and Euphrates waters for navigation, irrigation and hydro-electric power generation, survey and design work for improvement of rail communications between Baghdad and Basra and for the construction of a railway between Kirkuk and Sulaimaniyah. Technical assistance provided by the Soviet Union for these surveys and planning studies will be paid for on the same basis as for the 18 complete plants and establishments described above.

4. Although agreement in principle has been reached on all the 25 projects in Supplement No. 1 and delivery dates for equipment (in most cases 1960-62 for the light industries) have been stated in the agreement, separate agreements or contracts will be drawn up for each individual project. Soviet experts have now arrived in Iraq to discuss some of these contracts. In the time which has been available it seems doubtful whether this considerable programme has been

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elaborated in great detail or whether the priorities have been carefully worked out in relation to Iraq's overall requirements. Iraqi Ministers have in fact told me that they are still working on the revision of their development programme as a whole.

5. The second category of Soviet aid consists of 18 "optional" projects (set out in Supplement No. 2 to the agreement) for which the Soviet Union is willing to provide technical aid at any time during the currency of the agreement, at the request of the Iraq Government. The scope and nature of such Soviet aid would be the subject of separate agreements and would be paid for either through the barter of Iraqi goods or by payments in a convertible currency. The projects include the execution or partial execution of the Tigris and Euphrates improvement schemes, the railway improvement projects and the land reclamation scheme, whose survey is included in Supplement No. 1, a caustic soda plant, a plastics factory, a building and repair yard for river vessels, automatic telephone exchanges, the drilling of artesian wells, &c.

6. Finally, under the terms of an exchange of letters annexed to the main agreement but which does not appear to have been published, the Soviet Union agreed to provide experts for various sectors of the Iraqi economy and some 80 are ready to start as soon as their contracts have been approved by the Iraq Government. From this it appears that they will be paid for by the Iraq Government and that they are additional to the Soviet experts who will work on the various projects referred to above. Some of the 80 experts will work in factories, but most will help in agricultural departments, including agrarian reform, the formation of agricultural co-operatives, distribution, agricultural economy and planning. I have no evidence to show whether this choice represents an act of deliberate policy on the part of Dr. Kubba, but the presence of Soviet experts in these basic agricultural departments could be of great assistance to the Iraqi Communist Party in the efforts which they are now making to get the peasants organised on Communist lines. The National Democrats may be expected to oppose the formation of agricultural producer co-operatives on the Soviet model, since they are anxious to consolidate themselves with the peasants on a policy of peasant ownership.

7. It has been clear since the revolution that in revising the development programme the Iraq Government would place greater emphasis on industrialisation. This results from a natural desire to diversify the economy even at considerable cost, in order to create openings for employment and to make the country less dependent on the outside world. The example and precept of the Soviet *bloc* countries will also have been in the same direction. There must also have been operative the hope that a policy of industrialisation would bring visible results to the people more quickly than was possible under the programme of the old régime which was economically sound but which for various reasons failed to strike a popular note or show quick and conspicuous results. Whether the projects chosen are economically sound, it is too early to say. The steel plant, to operate initially on scrap, has doubtless been chosen for political reasons. The fertiliser factory was in the existing programme and Italian and German firms had already tendered for it. The experimental farms had already been recommended by American consultants. Other projects have clearly been chosen in order to save imports. But the economics and practicability of some of these have probably not yet been considered and they may run into the same kind of difficulties as had the textile factory, cement works and sugar beet factory started under the old régime. The biggest handicap to the new programme as it was to the old, will be the lack of skilled management and technical manpower; as a result of the purges of the administration since the revolution this is now in shorter supply than ever.

8. That Iraq should have turned to the Soviet Union for aid was in the present political situation inevitable. Dr. Kubba is undoubtedly the principal architect of the agreement, and he is clearly determined to do all he can to foster economic and other ties with the Soviet *bloc*. He and other members of the Government can use the agreement as propaganda that, having thrown off "imperialist ties", Iraq can with disinterested Soviet aid develop from a backward into a modern economy. An agreement of this type with a Communist State also has the superficial attraction that by negotiation with a single organisation, aid can be obtained for a large number of projects simultaneously, although separate negotiations will in fact be required for each project.

9. It is less easy to understand why Iraq should have contracted a loan to pay for part of the Soviet assistance. They are not short of foreign exchange; in

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fact their foreign balances are steadily mounting as a result of restriction of imports and stood at the end of January at over £140 million. They are traditionally averse to borrowing money which has to be repaid with interest, and Dr. Kubba, although a Communist sympathiser, is probably sufficiently astute to realise that the apparently low rate of interest of 2½ per cent may prove deceptive when related to the price and quality of some of the Soviet equipment. When I discussed this question with the Minister of Finance, he argued that Iraq would need additional funds for her revised development programme. This is only partly convincing as the Government cannot really know what their future financial requirements are likely to be until the revision of their development programme has been completed, and until they have a better idea what will be the level of oil royalties after the completion of the current Iraq Petroleum Company expansion programme, and how much they will spend from the royalties on projects outside the development programme proper when, as we are informed, the present 70:30 ratio is revised. When the intended merger of the Development Board with the Government Departments is carried out, the legal requirement for the 70:30 division of the oil revenues between development and ordinary budgets will cease to have the same meaning, and according to the Minister of Finance, will be amended. This would make it possible for the Government to spend more than 30 per cent of the oil revenues on non-development budgetary needs, including the armed forces, if they wish. A further consideration may well be political: to enhance the value of the Soviet contribution in the eyes of the Iraqi people.

10. We should be wise to assume that the Iraq Government and the Soviet Union will do everything possible to make the agreement work. In the limited commercial dealings which the Soviet *bloc* have so far had with Iraq, they have already earned criticism for the poor quality of some of their goods and delays in delivery. In carrying out the present agreement the Soviet Union will probably make a special effort to provide good equipment on time and to send first-class experts. But even Dr. Kubba has his doubts. He is reliably reported to have told an Iraqi business man that the agreement looked good on paper but that he did not know how it would work out in practice. He told my Turkish colleague that he was appalled at the high cost of living in the Soviet Union. He thought that they had some good heavy industry but that the finished products of Russian industry were of a very low standard. He must also be aware that by dispensing with the machinery of international tender he runs the risk of paying dearly for these projects. The agreement specifies that equipment is to be valued on the basis of world prices and it is proposed to set up a series of committees which will be charged with examining the prices to ensure that they are competitive. This may well not be an effective safeguard against the Russians' quoting artificially high prices. An even more serious difficulty arises out of the contribution which the Iraqis are expected to make to the carrying out of these projects. British firms engaged on public works contracts in Iraq might well, in the midst of their current labour difficulties, envy an arrangement such as that in the Iraqi-Soviet agreement under which the foreign contractor provides know-how and machinery and the Iraqis are responsible for the provision of labour, materials and general organisation. In fact, however, this is the contribution which the Iraqis are least qualified to make. I have already referred to the acute shortage of managerial staff in Iraq which has been aggravated by the present wave of arrests and dismissals in Government departments and agencies; in addition Iraq does not possess enough skilled or semi-skilled labour for her present requirements, let alone the needs of this larger programme. Finally, the Iraqis will have to find a solution to the problems of labour indiscipline and low productivity, which since the Revolution have greatly increased the costs and delays in carrying out construction projects of all kinds. My Soviet colleague was recently heard to say: "We have taken on a big responsibility. These people are crazy: they don't work", and my Polish colleague has been heard to comment, "Why did we not leave them to the English?". The Iraqis may well therefore have difficulty in carrying out their side of the bargain and this could become a source of friction and recrimination between them and the Russians.

11. It will be noted that the Russians are to carry out seismographic exploration for oil. In a Press conference after his return from the Soviet Union Dr. Kubba stated that this would be in the Khanaqin area and in Iraq's territorial waters. We think it probable that the Iraqis will try and exploit the oil themselves with Soviet aid.

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12. The Soviet Government no doubt hope that the agreement will give them considerable advantage over the West in supplying equipment for Iraq's economic development and the agreement does in principle provide them with an assured market over seven years for an annual average of about £7 million worth of machinery and other products of heavy industry. We should however not overlook the fact that this is probably only about half the amount of machinery and metal manufactures supplied by the United Kingdom in 1958, that in principle goods in this category can still be imported into Iraq from all sources without quota restrictions, and that there is still a strong preference for goods of United Kingdom manufacture which are well known in this market. Compared with other under-developed countries seeking assistance for economic development, Iraq with her large foreign exchange earnings is in a strong position and does not need to mortgage her economic future in order to obtain Soviet aid. She has not done so in this agreement. The main danger is that the Soviet experts, with the active encouragement of Dr. Kubba, will increasingly orient the Iraqi development authorities in favour of Soviet *bloc* equipment and methods, and that the Iraqis will get involved in some commitment to allow the Soviet Union to carry out the projects in Supplement No. 2. These could absorb a very large part of Iraq's foreign exchange earnings.

13. In conversations which I have had with the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Economics and the Minister of Development, I have expressed the hope that United Kingdom firms will be allowed to play a part in industrialisation in Iraq. The Minister of Finance has assured me that the Iraqi-Soviet Agreement will still leave a place for the West, but I have been unable to obtain any indication of the type of industrial development which might be open to tender by United Kingdom firms, probably for the good reason that the development programme has not yet been drawn up. Western participation in industrial development in Iraq will clearly be in the form of help in constructing plants to hand over to the Iraqis. Both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Economics have said that they do not want the investment of private capital from abroad, on the ground that such investment always means some form of political conditions or obligations.

14. There is one significant omission in the Soviet Agreement. Although it covers a wide field of activity it makes no reference to road construction, on which so many Western contractors have run into trouble in Iraq. The Russian scheme is to provide machinery and experts only. Road construction does not provide any scope for this kind of economic aid. We have heard that a Bulgarian contracting organisation is exploring the possibility of public works contracting in Iraq, but only on a basis which will ensure them a profit. The Iraqis may well find that the present difficult conditions for contracting, resulting partly from the inflexibility of the Development Board and partly from labour troubles, will act as a deterrent not only to Western firms but also to Communist organisations.

15. Despite the difficulties which both sides may encounter in carrying out the agreement, I think it would be wrong to expect it to break down in the near future or produce a series of spectacular failures. Both parties will be on their guard against this. At the same time I think the agreement will be a useful experience in educating the Iraqis to the facts of life. There is of course the danger, to which I have referred above, that the agreement will give the Soviet Union a foothold in the Iraqi market from which it will be impossible to dislodge her and from which she will be able to advance. From this point of view it is disquieting for British firms and we shall have to watch the situation closely. At the same time there is a reasonable hope that an important result of the agreement may be to teach the Iraqis that while there are some things which the Soviet *bloc* can carry out efficiently and cheaply, they tend to drive hard bargains and that in many fields trade with the West is to be preferred.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Ankara, Beirut (for Development Division), Karachi, Moscow, Paris, Tehran, Washington, and also to the Commercial Relations and Exports Department of the Board of Trade.

I have, &amp;c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

SECRET—GUARD



(Translation)

Enclosure No. 1

# AGREEMENT FOR ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ AND USSR

The Government of the Republic of Iraq and the Government of USSR, in accordance with the cordial relations existing between their respective countries and their desire to develop and strengthen economic and technical co-operation based on the principles of equality, non-intervention in each other's internal affairs and full respect for sovereignty and national dignity, have agreed on the following:

## ARTICLE 1

In order to foster Iraq's economic progress and in response to the wishes of the Republic of Iraq, the Government of the USSR agrees to co-operate with the Government of the Republic of Iraq in carrying out plans for the development of the Iraqi national economy in the fields of mining, chemical industry, machine building, the manufacture of electrical equipment and accessories, spinning, manufacture of foodstuffs and pharmaceuticals, transport, communications, agriculture, irrigation, land reclamation, aerial survey and geological exploration for minerals. The projects for which Soviet organisations will extend technical help to Iraqi governmental organisations are included in supplement No. 1 attached to this Agreement.

## ARTICLE 2

In furtherance of the co-operation described in Article 1 of this Agreement, the Government of USSR will, through the appropriate Soviet organisations, take all necessary steps to carry out, in co-operation with organs of the Iraq Government, exploratory geological surveys, design work and research for the projects listed in supplement No. 1 attached, to supply equipment and machinery; together with standard sets of spare parts and also raw materials for construction of buildings for the projects (when such raw materials are not available in Iraq). The Government of the USSR will provide Soviet experts on a technical assistance basis to select plant sites; to provide all primary information for design work; to advise on construction of projects in consultation with those supervising their design, on installation of apparatus and its adjustment, on operating the projects established with Soviet aid and also help during a period to be agreed upon between the two parties, in organising investment and attaining planned production capacities for the projects in question. The Government of the USSR will also help train Iraqi experts to operate the projects to be built with Soviet aid by sending Soviet specialised instructors to Iraq and if the Government of Iraq so desires, accepting Iraqis in the Soviet Union for vocational technical training in similar projects.

## ARTICLE 3

The Government of USSR undertakes that Soviet organisations will hand over to the Iraq Government the technical documents describing the operation of the plants to be built with Soviet aid under this Agreement. These documents will be handed over free of charge except for the actual cost of preparing the documents.

It is understood that the documents may be used only within the Republic of Iraq and not given to foreigners whether in private or Government employment. Exceptions to this rule can only be made with the agreement of the Soviet organisations concerned in each individual case.

## ARTICLE 4

The Government of the Republic of Iraq will set up through the Iraqi organisation concerned, the projects listed in Supplement No. 1 of this Agreement and will finance them. It is understood that organising of construction works, installation and erection and the supply of manpower and building materials available in Iraq, and also the supply of complementary services will be an Iraqi responsibility.

## ARTICLE 5

In order to meet the cost of the technical aid provided by the Soviet Union for construction of projects and execution of works listed in Supplement No. 1 to this Agreement, the Government of USSR will make available to the Iraqi Republic

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Government a loan amounting to 550 million roubles (1 rouble = 168,222 grammes of pure gold), carrying interest at an annual rate of 2½ per cent, to be used during seven years with effect from the date of coming into force of this Agreement.

The loan referred to in this article will be used to cover the following expenditure:

- Exploratory geological surveys, design work and research carried out by Soviet organisations.
- Equipment and machinery for projects and raw materials required for construction purposes and not available in Iraq. This will be supplied C.I.F. Iraqi ports.
- Travel expenses of Soviet experts travelling to and from Iraq.
- Cost of vocational and technical training for Iraqis in the Soviet Union.
- Actual cost of preparing and delivering the technical documents provided for in Article 3 of this Agreement.

In the event of a change in the gold value of the rouble, the balance of the loan will be adjusted accordingly.

If the cost of exploratory geological survey, design work, research, equipment, machinery and other materials and services to be provided by the Soviet Union for the projects and works listed in Supplement No. 1 to this Agreement, is less than the amount of the said loan, the two parties will later agree on a list of additional projects for which technical aid will be provided and paid for out of the balance of the loan.

If the cost of the services supplied by the Soviet Union exceeds the amount of the said loan, the extra sum will be repaid by the Iraq Government by delivery of Iraqi commodities to the Soviet Union in accordance with the Trade Agreement in force between the Republic of Iraq and the Soviet Union.

## ARTICLE 6

The Government of the Republic of Iraq will repay the amount of the loan expended on each project in 12 equally yearly instalments provided that the first instalment will be due for payment one year after the Soviet Union completes delivery of all equipment provided for in the contract relating to this project.

In cases where the technical aid for a project does not require the delivery of a complete set of apparatus and equipment from the Soviet Union, the amount of the loan drawn on for this project will be paid within a 12-year period starting from the date of receipt of the bill for the work completed by Soviet organisations.

Interest on sums used from the loan will accrue from the date on which the sums are drawn and will be due for payment during the first quarter following the year for which the interest is due.

In the case of equipment, machinery and materials, the date of the shipping document is considered as the date on which the loan is drawn upon. In the case of payment for design work, exploratory geological surveys, travel expenses of Soviet experts to and from Iraq and expenses for Iraqis in the Soviet Union and all other expenses, the date of presentation of the bill is considered as the date on which the loan is drawn upon.

## ARTICLE 7

Repayment of the loan and payment of interest will be made by the Government of the Republic of Iraq by crediting an equivalent amount of Iraqi dinars (1 Iraqi dinar = 2.48828 grammes of pure gold) to a special account opened by the Central Bank of Iraq in the name of Soviet Union State Bank.

Roubles will be converted into Iraqi dinars on the basis of the comparative amount of gold in the rouble and dinar on the date of repayment. The Soviet Union may use the sums available in this account for buying Iraqi commodities in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Iraqi-Soviet Trade Agreement and/or they may ask for them to be converted into any convertible currency to be agreed upon between the Central Bank of Iraq and the State Bank of the Soviet Union.

For the purposes of converting Iraqi dinars into any other convertible currency, the value of the Iraqi dinar will be calculated by reference to the comparative amount of gold in both currencies on the date of conversion.

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The balance of the State Bank of the Soviet Union in its account with the Central Bank of Iraq, will be revalued when any change occurs in the gold equivalent of the dinar and in the same proportion as the change.

## ARTICLE 8

In order to record the amounts drawn against the loan made available under the agreement, amounts paid in repayment of the said loan and in payment of interest, the Central Bank of Iraq and the State Bank of the Soviet Union will each open loan accounts in the name of the other and jointly prepare the technical arrangements for operating these accounts.

## ARTICLE 9

The Government of the Republic of Iraq will reimburse the Soviet Union for all the expenses borne by Soviet organisations concerned in sending Soviet experts to Iraq to assist in establishing the projects listed in Supplement No. 1 of this Agreement (with the exception of their travel expenses to and from Iraq) by paying the sums provided for in Iraqi dinars into a separate account held by the Central Bank of Iraq in the name of the State Bank of the Soviet Union for the credit of Soviet organisations.

Sums paid into this account may be used to cover the current expenses of Soviet organisations in Iraq. The unused balance may be converted into any convertible currency to be agreed upon between the Central Bank of Iraq and the State Bank of the Soviet Union.

## ARTICLE 10

The Government of USSR expresses its readiness to meet requests of the Government of the Republic of Iraq to buy spare parts in the Soviet Union over and above the standard set supplied with the equipment, and also certain kinds of raw materials required for operation of the projects constructed through Soviet Union aid.

Delivery of spare parts and raw materials will be carried out within the framework of the Iraqi-Soviet Trade Agreement.

## ARTICLE 11

Exploratory geological surveys, design work, research, the supply of equipment, machinery and materials from the Soviet Union, the sending of Soviet experts to Iraq and vocational and technical training of Iraqis; and the provision of other kinds of technical aid by the Soviet Union in accordance with this Agreement, will be carried out under contracts to be agreed upon between the competent Iraqi and Soviet organisations.

These contracts will fix the sites, dates, prices and insuring of equipment and machinery, their specifications in relation to the designed productive capacity, the responsibility of both sides in case of *force majeure* and other detailed conditions relating to fulfilment of the obligations of both sides under this Agreement. The price of the equipment, machinery and materials which will be delivered under this Agreement and also the prices of Iraqi commodities to be delivered to Soviet Union in payment of the loan and interest, will be fixed on the basis of world market prices.

## ARTICLE 12

The Soviet Union, in addition to extending technical aid for projects to be paid for out of the loan provided for in this Agreement, express their agreement to provide at the request of the Iraqi side, technical aid for industrial, agricultural and other projects as provided for in Supplement No. 2 of this Agreement. Payment of the expenses borne by the Soviet organisations concerned in giving technical aid for these projects will be made by the Iraqi side by delivery of goods to Soviet Union under the terms of Iraqi-Soviet Trade Agreement and/or in a convertible currency. The scope and types of technical assistance given by Soviet organisations, in the terms of this article, will be defined by additional agreements and supplementary contracts between the two sides.

This agreement shall be ratified in the shortest possible period and becomes valid from the date of exchange of instruments of ratification which will take place in Baghdad.

Done at Moscow on 16th March, 1959, in two original copies, one in the Arabic and one in the Russian language, both having equal legal force.

On behalf of the Government  
of USSR

On behalf of Iraqi  
Republic Government

# SUPPLEMENT No. 1 TO THE IRAQI-SOVIET AGREEMENT CONCLUDED ON MARCH 16, 1959

## LIST OF PROJECTS AND STUDIES FOR WHICH SOVIET ORGANISATIONS WILL EXTEND AID TO ORGANISATIONS OF THE IRAQ GOVERNMENT

Definition of projects and studies, their main characteristics and the kind of technical aid to be provided.

- (1) Steel factory using scrap iron with an annual capacity of 60,000 tons of malleable products—medium and small. The mill will include an iron foundry with an annual capacity of 5,000 tons of iron pipes and 5,000 tons of tempered iron.

Design work: 1960–62.

Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1961–63.

- (2) Nitrogen fertiliser plant with annual capacity of 60,000 tons of ammonia for subsequent conversion into ammonium nitrate and ammonium sulphate.

Research: 1959–60.

Design work: 1960–62.

Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1962–64.

- (3) Sulphur and sulphuric acid plant with a maximum annual capacity of 110,000 tons of sulphuric acid and 65,000 tons of sulphur.

Research: 1959–60.

Design work: 1960–62.

Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1962–64.

- (4) Plant for manufacturing pharmaceuticals and antibiotics with the following annual capacity:

Penicillin	...	...	...	...	...	5.5 tons
Streptomycin	...	...	...	...	...	5.5 tons
Biomycin	...	...	...	...	...	6.5 tons
Tinctures and extracts (liquid, dry and concentrated)	...	...	...	...	...	800 tons
Medical pastes	...	...	...	...	...	250 tons
Tablets	...	...	...	...	...	100 tons
Ampoules	...	...	...	...	...	40 million pieces

Design work: 1959–60.

Delivery of equipment: 1960–61.

- (5) Plant for manufacturing agricultural machinery and equipment and spare parts, with an annual capacity of:

Agricultural machinery	...	...	12,000 tons (30,000 pieces)
Spare parts	...	...	2,000 tons
Hand tools	...	...	1,000 tons
Other metal castings	...	...	2,000 tons

Research: 1959–60.

Design work: 1960–61.

Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1961–62.



- (6) Electrical equipment and accessories factory with an annual capacity of:
- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| Electrical transformers of 1,000 kW. ... | 1,000  |
| Electrical transformers of 50 kW. ...    | 25,000 |
| Electrical motors of 1 kW. ...           | 50,000 |
- The factory will have a repair workshop to handle 20 per cent of its output capacity.
- Research: 1959-60.  
Design work: 1960-62.  
Delivery of equipment: 1961-62.
- (7) Electrical lamp factory with maximum capacity of 15 million lamps. They will include:
- 8 million 100-W. lamps
  - 7 million 200-W. lamps, and in addition
  - 2 million fluorescent lamps
- Research: 1959-60.  
Design work 1960-62.  
Delivery of equipment: 1961-62.
- (8) Broadcasting station comprising four short-wave transmitters of 100 kW. each, to be located in Baghdad area.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.
- (9) Glassware factory of 83 tons daily capacity for bottles, window-glass and other glassware.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.  
Delivery of equipment: 1961-62.
- (10) Cotton textile mill of 60,000 spindles and other equipment sufficient for an annual production of 30 million metres of cotton textiles and 1,100 tons of cotton yarn.  
Research: 1959.  
Design work: 1960-61.  
Delivery of equipment: 1961-62.
- (11) Woollen textile mill to produce 1.7-2 million square metres annually: in addition there will be wool-scouring plant.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.  
Delivery of equipment: 1961-62.
- (12) Knitwear factory to produce annually 6 million pairs of socks and stockings, 3.8 million pieces of underwear and 1 million other garments.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.  
Delivery of equipment: 1960-61.
- (13) Tailoring factory with 130 sewing machines of various sizes to handle 3 million metres of cloth annually.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.  
Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1961.
- (14) Geological work:
- (a) Geological survey on a scale of 1:200,000 of the whole of Iraqi territory and exploratory work in barren districts.
  - (b) Magnetic survey of an area of 500 square kilometres on a scale of 1:25,000.
  - (c) Seismographical exploration for oil in an area of 300 square kilometres.
  - (d) Exploration for sulphur and phosphates (the period of technical aid will be fixed and agreed upon between the two parties).
- (15) A centre for repairing geological apparatus and a laboratory for geological exploratory work.  
(Supply of equipment and other services and the period of technical aid to be fixed and agreed upon between the two parties.)

- (16) Two concrete silos, each of 12,000-ton capacity with two grain elevators, each with a capacity of 1,000 tons per hour.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.  
Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1960-61.
- (17) Canning factory for vegetables, fruits and meats, with a maximum capacity of 3 million tins a year, and a refrigerating store of 50 tons capacity.  
Research and design work: 1959-60.  
Delivery of equipment, &c.: 1960-61.
- (18) Technical aid in the establishment of five Government farms:
- Sugar beet farm, not exceeding 2,500 hectares
  - Cotton experimental establishment, not exceeding 3,000 hectares
  - Seed experimental establishment, not exceeding 1,000 hectares
  - Rice experimental establishment, not exceeding 3,000 hectares
  - Medicinal herbs experimental establishment, not exceeding 200 hectares
- Research, design work and delivery of equipment: 1959-60.
- (19) Technical aid in establishing four tractor hire stations, either independent or attached to Government farms and designed to serve peasant farms. Total tractors not to exceed 100.  
Research, design work and delivery of equipment: 1959-60.
- (20) Draining of irrigated lands, South Iraq; 1.5 million hectares.  
Research and design work: 1959-65.
- (21) Preparation of a plan for developing Tigris waters for irrigation, navigation and hydro-electric generating.  
Research and design work: 1959-63.
- (22) Preparation of a plan for Euphrates waters.  
Research and design work: 1959-63.
- (23) Improvement of river navigation:  
Tigris River (Baghdad-Basra section to Shatt al-Arab mouth)  
Euphrates River (Hit-Basra section)  
Research, preparation of designs in relation to priority plans and delivery of equipment for survey: 1959-60.
- (24) Baghdad-Basra railway line (improvement of existing metre gauge and building of a standard line).  
Research and design work: 1959-62.  
Delivery of equipment for survey: 1959-60.
- (25) Kirkuk-Sulaimaniya railway line.  
Survey and design work: 1960-62.  
Delivery of equipment for survey: 1960.

#### Remarks:

(1) The application of technical aid in relation to the plans and studies mentioned above may be changed by agreement between the two parties, within the limits of the loan provided for in this agreement.

(2) When drawing up designs, the Soviet institutions will take into consideration the desire of the Iraqi side to receive technical documents in order to expedite the starting of work on the projects concerned.

#### SUPPLEMENT No. 2 TO THE IRAQI-SOVIET AGREEMENT CONCLUDED ON MARCH 16, 1959

#### LIST OF PROJECTS AND STUDIES FOR WHICH SOVIET ORGANISATIONS WILL PROVIDE TECHNICAL AID TO IRAQI GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS

##### Definition of projects and studies and their main characteristics.

- (1) Electrolytic caustic soda plant with the following annual capacity: 22,400 tons of caustic soda and 20,000 tons of chlorine to be converted into powder, chloride, hydrochloric acid and liquid chlorine.



- (2) Plastics factory with an annual capacity of 20,000 tons of polyvinyl chloride and 20,000 tons of ethylene.
- (3) A dockyard for building and repairing river vessels with an annual capacity of 10 vessels of 400 h.p. each and 10 barges yearly.
- (4) Workshop for building railway wagons in Baghdad Central Railway shops, to produce 300 wagons annually.
- (5) Technical aid in construction and equipment for installations to control the upper Euphrates waters.
- (6) Technical aid in building and equipment for a number of installations on the Tigris to improve irrigation and navigation and generation of electricity.
- (7) Technical aid for building and equipment for installations for reclamation of irrigated land in South Iraq: area—1.5 million hectares.
- (8) Technical aid and equipment for drilling 300 artesian wells to a depth of 100-200 metres.
- (9) Technical aid in constructing Baghdad-Basra railway line (improvement of existing line and constructing of a standard gauge line).
- (10) Technical aid in constructing Kirkuk-Sulaimaniyah railway line.
- (11) Improvement of existing Basra Port wharves and construction of new ones.
- (12) Technical aid and equipment for installations to improve river navigation on the Tigris (Baghdad-Basra to mouth of Shatt al-Arab) and the Euphrates (Basra-Hit).
- (13) Three automatic telephone exchanges of 10,000 subscribers each.
- (14) Technical aid for long-term plan to improve broadcasting and television and supply of equipment for this purpose, execution to be completed in accordance with the long-term plan.
- (15) Repair of transmission towers of medium and short-wave stations of Baghdad Broadcasting Station.
- (16) Repair of Baghdad Broadcasting Studios.
- (17) Technical aid for study of roads.
- (18) Research in development of industrial uses for dates.

EQ 10334/15

No. 9

# RECORD OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND SHAHANSHAH OF IRAN ON THE 5th OF MAY, 1959

*Mr. Selwyn Lloyd to Mr. J. W. Russell (Tehran)*

(No. 69. Confidential)  
Sir,

*Foreign Office,  
May 8, 1959.*

After dinner at Buckingham Palace on the 5th of May I had a short conversation with the Shah. I referred to the Iraqi tragedy and said that I was convinced that it had nothing to do with the foreign policy of the old régime. The causes were that the rich had not been taxed sufficiently and that Nuri had not allowed the Middle classes to share the responsibility of running the country. He had sat on the lid far too tightly. If there had been a moderate system of taxation of the large landowners and if some kind of expression of opinion had been allowed to opposition elements, I believed that Nuri would have remained in power and the régime lasted a long time.

2. I said that that having happened in Iraq one could not help wondering whether the same thing was true of Iran. Some people said it was so. I hoped that His Majesty would permit me to enquire from him his views. The Shah said that he was inclined to agree with me about Iraq but I must remember that Iraq was a new country without national loyalty and that the royal family were Hashemite, not Iraqi. They were regarded as foreigners. In Iran the situation was quite different. Iran had 2,500 years of history. The royal family were Iranian and in any case the rich were taxed in Iran. He himself was frequently accused of persecuting the rich. He was therefore quite happy about the state of affairs. The Russian attacks were producing a sense of national unity and the situation was fully under control.

3. I then spoke of our relations with the new Iraqi Government and of our dilemma about arms. The Shah said that he thought we were right to agree to continue the supply of arms to Iraq and added that the situation seemed strange to Iranians. The Iraqis had left the Baghdad Pact and were flirting with Communism and they got arms both from the Russians and now from us. Poor Iran, which was loyal to the Alliance and staunch against Communism, could not get arms from the West. He considered that I ought to think that situation over.

4. The conversation was interrupted at this point.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Baghdad, Ankara, Washington and Moscow and to the United Kingdom High Commissioner at Karachi.

I am, &c.

SELWYN LLOYD.



EQ 1021/6

No. 10

## IRAQI FRONTIERS

*Sir Geoffrey Harrison to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received May 16)*

(No. 21. Saving. Secret.)

Tehran,

Sir,

May 13, 1959.

Baghdad telegram No. 507: Iraqi Frontiers.

It is difficult to obtain reliable information about what is happening on the Kurdistan frontier, but there is undoubtedly something abnormal going on there. At this time of year there is always a seasonal movement of Kurdish tribes from Iraq into Iran. Normally these tribes are allowed virtually free movement across the frontier. But this year the movement was at first considerably restricted, by deliberate and general impediment on the Iraqi side and close security control on the Iranian.

2. Until about two months ago the Iranian Government, for political reasons, were undoubtedly encouraging the movement into Iran of Kurdish tribal notabilities from Iraq. In many cases these quite minor "defections" (which indeed hardly qualify for the name) were exaggerated into major propaganda triumphs. This policy now seems to have been dropped by the Government, although my own guess is that the local Iranian authorities on the frontier are actively encouraging the return of disaffected Kurdish elements into Iraq.

3. The Iranian Press has been printing stories, which I imagine to be exaggerated out of all proportion, about the resistance offered by local Kurdish chiefs to the Iraqi authorities. At Seyedgan, 60 km. from the frontier, Sheikh Rashid and Mahmud Beyk are alleged to have attacked with 700 armed men a post defended by 60 gendarmes and 150 Left-wing volunteers, and to have liberated various members of the insurgents' families detained there. Two leaders of the Zibari tribe are alleged to be resisting Iraqi forces at Zakhou and Emadieh, 40 km. from the frontier. Etc., etc. . . .

4. In Government circles there is continued nervousness here about the general situation in Iraq, particularly the risk of overt intervention by other Powers, e.g., the U.A.R. from Syria. Both the Prime Minister and Minister of Court spoke in this sense to me after dinner on the 9th of May. See also my letter of the 6th of May to Sir Roger Stevens, recording the Minister of Court's talk of a British-backed Jordanian intervention in Iraq.

5. The *Daily Telegraph* story about Soviet troops at Herat (Foreign Office telegram No. 794 of the 11th of May) has been denied by both Soviet and Afghan Embassies here, but is widely believed and has thus nicely played the Soviet game by contributing to the general state of nerves.

SECRET-GUARD

EQ 1015/325

No. 11

## COMMUNIST POLICY IN IRAQ

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received May 18)*

(No. 58. Confidential)

Baghdad,

Sir,

May 8, 1959.

I enclose a translation<sup>(1)</sup> of the text of an interview given to the Communist Party paper *Ittihad al-Sha'ab* on the 30th of March by Salam Adil, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party. Salam Adil (pseudonym for Hussein Al Radi) is a young member of the Communist Party leadership and, according to some indications, one of the brains behind it. He was one of the three members of a delegation from the party which attended the 21st Communist Party Congress in Moscow. He can probably be taken as expounding authoritatively the party line for public consumption, and it is unlikely that in doing so he will have diverged from the views of Moscow.

2. The main themes which emerged from this interview are as follows:

(a) He emphasises the "imperialist" inspiration of all internal or external opposition to the Iraqi Republican régime, from the landings in the Lebanon and Jordan immediately after the revolution of the 14th of July, to the revolt of Colonel Shawwaf in Mosul between the 7th and 9th of March this year. The opposition of members of the Ba'ath and Istiqlal Parties was a result of "imperialist deception" and the opposition now maintained by Colonel Nasser is a result of "Arabised imperialist direction", a policy adopted by Iraq's enemies to confuse opinion both in Iraq and elsewhere in the Arab world and complicate relations with the Soviet bloc.

(b) He maintains that external opposition to the Republic was thwarted by the Soviet Union and that the only countries who have proved their friendship with the Iraqi Republic have been those of the Communist bloc.

(c) The economic policy advocated by the party is said by Salam Adil to be not in any way "Socialistic". It entails agrarian reform, limitation of property, strict control of oil and other companies (nationalisation is not mentioned), Iraq's departure from the sterling area, full employment, the encouragement of private capital investment and the development of social security.

(d) The Arab democratic national revolution is a "definite historical objective question". Arab nationhood is on the way to a unified liberal and democratic existence based on cordial relations between the peoples of the Arab countries, and particularly on the struggle of the people in Syria and Egypt. The federation of the United Arab Republic and the Yemen was formerly a progressive idea, but the subordination of the United Arab Republic Rulers to the efforts of imperialism which led to a feverish crusade against Iraq, Communism and the Soviet Union, made it impossible to proceed along this course.

(e) The internal policy of maintaining the National Unity Front of all political parties is still the correct one. Although some elements in it had lapsed into conspiracy against the régime, these contained many people, especially young men, who had not been defiled by the methods used by the conspirators or who had since corrected their position. Opportunity must be given to these to prove their loyalty by denouncing conspirators and punishing them. The execution of the policy of the Republic still required the support and collaboration of all national forces, but in the new circumstances the structure and function of the National Unity Front required reconsideration with the particular object of depending more upon the support of the masses of the people.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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3. The interview brings out clearly and systematically the ideas which have underlain and inspired Communist propaganda in recent weeks, calculated anti-Westernism, irreconcilable hostility to Nasser, friendship with the Soviet bloc. It is most interesting in its indications of Communist policy towards Iraq's internal affairs, both political and economic. They suggest that the party is looking forward to a period of consolidation in which it can strengthen its own position and undermine further that of its opponents, rather than to a quick conquest of power. The Communists will clearly have no truck with any of the other political parties, except the Left-wing inclined United Democratic Party of Kurdistan and, within certain limits, the National Democratic Party. It appears that they wish to see political life organised mainly on the basis of mass organisations dominated by themselves. Presumably the Peace Partisans, the trade unions and the peasant associations will be the main elements in this policy. In the process of forming them, they will seek to attract members of other parties, whether out of fear or self-interest or by persuasion. The National Democratic Party has escaped the charge of treason since the Mosul revolt and is not at present under direct attack by the Communists. But the two parties are in rivalry in seeking to impose their influence on the countryside; there have been clashes and, as the National Democratic newspaper has complained, the Communists have in some places managed to enlist the aid of the officials in their favour.

4. The question arises whether the Communists by apparently accepting the need for a period of consolidation and by suggesting that it is not their intention to seize power soon, are doing so because they fear to increase the opposition to Communism in the rest of the Arab world, because of the difficulty arising from the dependence of Iraq's development on Iraq Petroleum Company royalties and investment, or because they doubt their capacity to take over the country at this stage without a period for disarming opposition and winning fresh support. There is nothing conciliatory in this interview regarding relations with President Nasser and the other Arab Governments. It seems unlikely, therefore, that the Iraqi Communists intend to go slow in order to keep peace in the Arab world, whatever Khrushchev's feelings may be in the matter. What the Communist views are about the running of the oil industry in a Communist Iraqi State we simply do not know. If, however, it is correct to calculate that Iraq's oil can only find sufficient markets by the inclusion of those in the Western world, then it would seem foolish of the Party to risk antagonising the West irredeemably and make it impossible for the Iraq Petroleum Company to continue its investment programme and its operations. This consideration may be an important factor in impelling the Party leadership to be cautious, and it is probably one with which Moscow would agree.

5. There are no doubt tactical considerations also which influence the party in the same direction. It is true that since the Mosul revolt they have made considerable progress in obtaining fulfilment of their political demands for the purging of the army and administration of nationalist elements. As a result they have made it unlikely that there could be any organised opposition to the régime from inside the country for some time to come. Yet they have not yet obtained the positive control of the army and administration which they would like. One of their difficulties is the absence of sufficient trained Communist officers and civil servants to fill the vacancies that arise as a result of the purge. Another is the resistance of most of the present Ministers to the infiltration of Communists into their departments, even when they feel obliged to give way to the pressure for dismissing Nationalists. Another is probably the sheer intractability of the problem of controlling Iraq outside the large towns; the Communists have only just started to embark on this problem through the organisation of peasant associations, and the republican régime has not as yet achieved enough in the countryside to make the task of breaking down the secular conservatism of the peasants at all an easy one. They may also be hampered in ways which it is difficult to observe by the increasing distrust of Communism as an alien and suspect materialist ideology which is felt as a result of the party's activities coming more into the open, and also by the unexpressed but widespread admiration for Colonel Nasser and for pan-Arab nationalism, which must still exist in the country. But perhaps the greatest difficulty confronting the Communists may at this moment lie in the aims and personality of the Prime Minister himself. The latter continues in his public speeches to assert that he stands above parties, that he has no intention of serving only a minority and that he is with all parties which are genuinely working for the republic; moreover he claims to wish not to attack the elements which have opposed him but

rather to win them back; he condemns dissension between parties and appeals for the help of all democratic forces. It is probable that these ideas of Qasim, though naïve, are genuine and that the Communists are having to adapt themselves to them, at least in their public pronouncements. For it seems doubtful whether they are yet finding Qasim ready to give them all that they want. He continues to avoid complying with their demand for the execution of the death sentences and for the sanctioning of political activities leading presumably up to elections to a constituent assembly, and it is probable that he is not ready to give them all they want in terms of appointments in the Council of Ministers and in the army. There may come a time in the future when he may seem more of a handicap than a help to them and they may then try to remove him, or more likely, despatch him upstairs by securing his election as President. For the present however his position is strong in the public eye, thanks partly to the build-up that the Communists themselves have given him, and the Communists do not yet seem to have been able to produce an Arab leader who could stand forth in his own right (most of the party leadership are not Arab in origin). In short, the continued progress of the party still seems to be so bound up with Qasim's dependence on them for backing him against Nasser, that there is no question of their abandoning him yet. In some ways their co-operation with him has its tactical disadvantages as well as advantages and may partly explain the apparent Communist caution.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Moscow, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Washington, Karachi, Political Office with the Middle East Forces, and Kuwait.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.



EQ 1021/7

No. 12

## IRAQI-IRANIAN FRONTIER

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received May 21)*(No. 604. Secret)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
May 21, 1959.

My telegram No. 07: Iraqi-Iranian Frontier.

The Americans have received following account of tribal fighting in Kurdistan from their Consul in Tabriz. Sheikh Razhid Lawlan of the Baradost tribe has been fighting Barzanis with 300 fighting men after sending old men, women and children into Turkey. (These are refugees previously reported, the numbers of which are said to have recently increased.) Barzani have 300 fighting men plus 500 police and are armed with British rifles. On the 14th of May there was pitched battle in which Baradost claim to have caused 27 casualties including 19 Barzani dead. According to one account Iraqis subsequently drove rebels into Persia, but they were also said last week to be holding strip of territory 7 [? group omitted] wide on Iraqi side of Iraqi-Iranian border in the extreme north-east of Iraq. It appears certain that Iranian Army gave them 200 German rifles and 20,000 rounds of ammunition.

2. My United States colleague has suggested to State Department and American Ambassador, Tehran, that Iranians should be stopped supporting Iraqi rebels.

3. Iranian Military Attaché, who was recently in Tehran, has told us that about 2,000 Kurdish tribesmen have crossed into Persia in opposition to Land Reform Act or to the policy of Iraq Government generally. The Iranian Government was doing all it could to stop them coming over.

4. The story of Iraqi officers escaping into Persia is apparently unfounded.

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EQ 1021/7A

No. 13

## IRAQI-IRANIAN FRONTIER

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received May 21)*(No. 605. Secret)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
May 21, 1959.

My immediately preceding telegram: Iraqi-Iranian frontier.

The Iraqi Military Attaché, Tehran, told the Iranian Military Attaché that Qasim definitely suspected Iranians and Americans of plotting against him. The Iranian Military Attaché has done his best to disabuse his Iraqi opposite number of this idea and hopes to be able to work on Qasim direct.

2. He suggested to us that these suspicions might arise from existence of an American training team with Iranian Army not far from the Iraqi border, north-east of Khanaqin. I have discussed this with my United States colleague who took the matter up in Washington. He thought that Iraqi reports might be derived from training teams from civilian contractors building barracks for Iranian Army in frontier area east of Haji Umran or from Technical Assistance Officer in Iranian Kurdistan. In all cases there were obvious objections to withdrawal of Americans. He had, however, specially asked that there should be no American intelligence contacts with Kurds in sensitive area.

3. My United States colleague is fully alive to the awkward consequences of American presence near the border and we can leave him to press for any action possible which will diminish Iraqi suspicion. We have been told by Iranian Military Attaché that he understands American officers in training team are being withdrawn.

SECRET—GUARD



EQ 1051/23

No. 14

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received June 14)*(No. 753. Confidential)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
June 13, 1959

My immediately preceding telegram: Iraqi internal situation.

The Communists' anti-Imperialist attacks have for the moment been switched from the Americans to ourselves. This campaign started after the announcement of arms deal, and has used as its material British Press comment on Qasim and the Communists, the Nutting interview, the withdrawal from Habbaniya and Iraq's departure from the sterling area. The general line is that we are cleverer and more subtle than the Americans (old pirates and young gangsters) and, therefore, more dangerous. We have shown friendliness and readiness to meet Iraqi point of view, even to the extent of realistically taking the initiative in abrogating special privileges. These tactics admittedly "meet with credulity among certain patriotic quarters", and are clearly aimed at the Communist Party of Iraq. We are seeking by propaganda to suggest that it is the Communists who are trying to direct the Iraqi Government from its policy of neutrality, and that the Communists are at odds with Qasim. But we are seeking to divert Iraqi policy from the true democratic course of the republic.

2. This campaign is a new development. Hitherto, the main target was the Americans as major Imperialist Power supporting Nasser's plots. We were presumably not regarded as a danger to the Communists and they may have even believed Nasser's propaganda that we would rather see them than Nasser in control of Iraq. They now seem to see Qasim's policy of neutrality and our support of it as the greater danger and attacking us, have an opportunity of attacking the National Democrats and those features of Qasim's policy which they particularly dislike.

3. We have no reason to be dismayed by these attacks which seem to confirm that we are on the right lines. But we shall have to watch our step. The Communists will pounce on any mistake we make.

SECRET—GUARD

EQ 1223/106

No. 15

## THE DEPARTURE OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE FROM IRAQ

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received June 22)*(No. 79. Confidential)  
Sir,Baghdad,  
June 17, 1959.

On the 9th of June, 1959, the last British forces serving in Iraq under the Special Agreement signed in Baghdad on the 4th of April, 1955, left the country, and the portion of the old Royal Air Force base at Habbaniya which had remained in British occupation as a staging post was handed over to the Iraqis. Since the revolution the staging post had not operated, and it is now clear that General Qasim never intended that it should operate again. Soon after the revolution we cut down the numbers of the staging post to the minimum necessary to maintain the equipment and perform certain services for the Iraqis under the Special Agreement. The men were left there through the winter while we tried to bring General Qasim to negotiate on future staging. We made it clear to him that whereas we considered that we had a perfect right under the Special Agreement to retain British forces in Habbaniya, there was no question of keeping them there without the agreement of the Iraqi Government. General Qasim could have asked us at any moment to take the troops away and we should have agreed. That he did not do so was probably due to his desire not to be caught out doing something for which he had no legal justification. He wanted first to get out of the Baghdad Pact, which would mean automatically the abrogation of the Special Agreement and the removal of the British troops. During the first months after the revolution he was probably afraid of provoking the Baghdad Pact Powers to intervene against him if he should take unilateral action to abrogate the Pact, at a time when he still had to face serious nationalist opposition and the threat of armed revolt. So it was only on the 24th of March when the Mosul revolt had been crushed and when he was under strong pressure from the Communists, that he decided to take action to abrogate the Pact. By this time we had already decided that maintenance of British troops in Habbaniya was a hostage to fortune which was not justified by any negotiating advantage and that we would in any case remove the troops. The Iraqi denunciation of the Pact which meant the automatic abrogation of the Special Agreement settled the matter. Her Majesty's Government immediately responded and announced that they were withdrawing their troops. The Communists subsequently gave us the credit for a clever move by taking the initiative in this matter.

2. After the Iraqis had made a half-hearted attempt to bundle us out in a few weeks, we got agreement to an orderly procedure and with a surprising degree of co-operation, which did not however extend to the landing of military aircraft at Habbaniya, we were able to remove and dispose of stores and ammunition and evacuate all troops in just over two months, a period far less than the six months estimated by the Air Ministry. The stores sold to the Iraqi Government or privately fetched over £245,000, an amount which was surprisingly good in view of the weak position of the seller on such occasions and in the light of our experience in the Canal Base and in Jordan. There remains to be settled a very considerable debt and some claims by workmen employed at the base. The Assyrians formerly employed in the Royal Air Force Levies, have now realised that their future lies in their settling down as Iraqi citizens. They find it better in the present political climate to disassociate themselves from this Embassy as far as possible and a number of those who had formerly taken British are reverting to Iraqi nationality. The policy of the present Government is based upon unity between the majority and the minorities and the Assyrians need fear no persecution as a community.

3. The final evacuation was unobtrusive and was marked by comparatively little publicity on the inevitable theme of the removal of the imperialist occupation. The base at Habbaniya served its purpose particularly during the war and we need not regret having built it. The retention of British troops in Iraq is not in tune with the existing political situation and it is as well they have left. The Royal Air Force has old associations with the Iraqi Air Force. Although the

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Iraqi Air Force will now be using Soviet fighters and bombers, it is to be hoped that they will continue to buy British aircraft and that some Iraqi Air Force officers will continue to receive training in the United Kingdom. As soon as the last British airman had left, I wrote to the Prime Minister that there were many ways in which the old association and close co-operation between the two air forces might be continued on a basis of equality and mutual benefit, and that I trusted that the good relations and close connections which had hitherto existed between the two services would persist in the years to come to the advantage of both countries. Let us hope that political conditions in Iraq make this at least to some extent possible.

I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Ankara, Tehran and Washington, the United Kingdom High Commissioner at Karachi, and the Political Officer, Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

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EQ 1015/419

No. 16

## THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN IRAQ

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received July 13)*

(No. 88. Confidential)  
Sir,

Baghdad,  
July 9, 1959.

In the last three months there has been, to all appearances, a marked change in the internal situation in Iraq. By the end of April the Communists had profited to the full from the ill-advised and ill-executed Mosul revolt. Prominent nationalists in the Army and in civil life to a considerable number which it is still impossible to estimate, were interned. The public trials of nationalist officers involved in the Mosul plot convinced public opinion in Iraq that Nasser was behind the plot and that the principal enemies of the Iraqi Republic were Nasser and the Pan-Arab nationalists. Nasser assisted the Communists by making a series of intemperate speeches attacking Qasim, and there were reports, which seemed well-founded, that he was preparing to renew his attacks on the Iraqi régime by arming and subverting the Iraqi tribes in the north-west. The Communists, consolidating their position in the Iraqi administration, were obtaining increasing control of Iraqi life through terrorisation, and were organising with efficiency demonstrations and public meetings intended to advertise that they were now in command. The trade unions were largely under Communist control, the central Peasants' Federation was formed under Communist auspices in such a way as apparently to give the Communists the chance of directing the whole movement of the peasants' associations, the Peace Partisans, strengthened by a conference in Baghdad with the participation of international Communist delegates, were an effective weapon of Communist propaganda, and the Popular Resistance Forces took an increasingly active part in the maintenance of security in the towns and in tribal skirmishes in Kurdistan. In the country towns, particularly in the south, the Communists seemed to be largely in control, although there were isolated areas particularly in the west where the nationalists retained their traditional influence. The National Democratic Party were negotiating with the Communists for the formation of a popular front and seemed unable to offer very effective resistance to the Communists. The Kurdish Democratic

Party was believed to be virtually in the Communists' hands. The workers were getting out of hand and were pressing their demands on the managers, both Iraqi and foreign, by violence and threats. The authority of Government officials and the security forces was gravely impaired. Murders of nationalists went unpunished and a senior Army officer retired on political grounds was murdered by his men. Over 200 senior Army officers were retired and the Army seemed to be losing its capability for effective action in support of the Government.

2. It was not surprising that many observers outside and inside Iraq believed that the situation was lost and that it was too late for Qasim to check the Communists. The aim of the Communists was to make people believe that they already had complete control and to make their opponents despair. Yet it seemed to a number of observers of the situation in Iraq that the game was not yet lost and that although the Communists had gained so much, they might find it difficult to achieve the final steps which would give them control. They were powerful, they had the only well-organised party, most of their Right-wing opponents were scattered and powerless; but their numbers were small and their political influence depended to a considerable extent upon what the Iraqis call the 14th of July Communists, the fair weather friends who followed the apparently winning side. The majority of informed political opinion in Iraq, though predominantly Left wing, was still non-Communist, although a similar situation had not prevented the rise of Communists to power in other countries. The Communists' position suffered from certain weaknesses. They were against the tide of Arab nationalism which was still a powerful force. They could not cut off all links with the West, since the Iraqi revolution was dependent upon the royalties obtained from the Iraq Petroleum Company and expropriatory action would at the very least cause serious dislocation. Their dependence on Moscow came up against the average Iraqi's strong feeling for independence. They had built up Qasim as the popular



leader of the masses and were thus to a considerable extent dependent upon him. The masses who shouted in the streets were shouting not for Communism but for Qasim, and his popularity seemed to increase every day.

3. In these circumstances, the whole situation seemed to depend on Qasim. He is still something of an enigma. Many Arab nationalists both inside and outside Iraq believed, and some still believe, that he is or was a Communist. His public statements on international issues were sometimes very close to the Communist line, even though the anti-imperialism was common enough in Arab nationalist parlance. He seemed to be naive in the extreme in dealing with the Communists and the internal situation, to float passively on the political surface and to be lacking in the will to take positive action. His ideas seemed to have become fixed in the simple formulas of the revolution, the crushing of imperialism and the liberation of the people. Yet he was at last beginning to show one strong characteristic, a dislike of pressure and a will and ability to resist it. The Communists had been pressing for months for the execution of members of the old régime condemned to death by the People's Court. They had been demanding ever more extensive purges and the arming not only of the Popular Resistance Forces but of the masses. He had in the main resisted these demands.

4. It was widely believed, and may well be true, that the Iraqi Communist Party has for the last few months been split on tactics. One section, according to this theory, has been urging quick action to take power. They may have been influenced by the experience of Khalid Bikdash who nearly won a Communist victory in Syria when he was defeated by the formation of the United Arab Republic. The other section are to be advocates of a policy of relatively slow consolidation of their position in the Government departments, in the various associations and in the life of the country before they try and take power. Whether this analysis is true or not, it seems that the advocates of positive and quick action had their way. The Communists seem to have decided that their advantage must be pressed home. On the 29th of April they issued a manifesto for May Day containing their first demand for the representation of the Communist Party in the Government. Qasim reacted promptly. In his speech for May Day he said that the Communists'

demands were untimely. The Communist Press launched a major campaign to press their demand. Qasim remained firm in his refusal to grant it and said that in his view there should be no political parties during the so-called transitional period. By the 20th of May the National Democrats had come out into the open against the Communists on this issue and had responded to Qasim's call by suspending all political activity. Since this time the National Democrats and the Communists have been openly at loggerheads and have conducted spirited warfare in the Press. In the latter half of May it seemed that the Government, with the support of the National Democratic Party, was beginning to assert itself and to make some attempt to restore the authority of the State. Restrictions began to be placed upon the Popular Resistance Forces; magistrates were reminded of their responsibility for supporting the rights of the individual, and there were signs of growing opposition to the Communist Committee for the Defence of the Republic which had been formed in Government departments.

5. It was at this juncture that Qasim must have begun to realise that the Communists were penetrating the Army and contemplating action in the Army parallel to their political demand for participation in the Government. Matters seem to have come to a head in the first week of June. It is still difficult to say exactly what happened. Two pro-Communist elements in the Army seem to have been identified as responsible for the movement. Information must have come to the Ministry of Defence by the 4th of June from which date the senior officers were in continuous conference. On the 6th of June troops moved from the north to the outskirts of Baghdad and from the south to the west of Baghdad. On the 7th or 8th of June Colonel Salman Abdul Majid al Hassan, Commander of the 6th Armoured Brigade at Rashid Camp near Baghdad, and some 20 of his officers are reported to have been arrested. Many rumours have been current of plans made by him to use his tanks against Baghdad, but there is no certain information. Probably about the same time the General Officer Commanding the 2nd Division, Brigadier Daud Salman Abbas al Jenabi, widely believed to be a Communist sympathiser, was relieved of his duties after a visit by the Chief of the General Staff to his headquarters at Kirkuk. He was officially retired on the 1st of July and was

later reported as being under arrest with five other junior officers of Communist tendencies. The political affiliations of these six officers are confirmed by the protests of the Communist Party newspaper at the action taken against them. It is believed that Qasim then, probably on the 9th of June, assembled the officers of his own old 19th Brigade and others with whom he had been connected in the past, and conferred with them on the situation. The officers are said to have complained bitterly at this conference that they were out of touch with him and that his immediate entourage were preventing them from seeing him. In the middle of June Qasim delivered a number of emotional speeches, three to the Army on the occasion of the Id festival, stressing in vigorous terms the importance of keeping the Army out of politics. On about the 18th of June it was reported that Brigadier Taha Shaikh Ahmed, the Director of Plans in the Ministry of Defence, also believed to be a strong Communist sympathiser, was under investigation. Since then we are told that his important duties in charge of intelligence and security have been removed from him and that he is under strict supervision, although he does not seem to have been relieved of his post.

6. At the same time Qasim seemed to begin to realise that he could no longer depend for the maintenance of his position on the political support of the Communist Party and on his popularity with the masses, unless, as has been suggested, he had always planned to deal with the nationalists first and then the Communists. He initiated a policy of conciliation of the nationalists. On the 11th of June on the occasion of the Id he declared an amnesty for those who had been arrested and interned after the Mosul revolt without trial and since then, according to our information, they have all, including prominent nationalists, been released. Now by order of the Military Governor, Government departments are being ordered to restore their previous posts to those who were Government officials. It has since transpired that a number of them were seriously ill-treated under investigation, but it seems likely that those interested in putting their opponents away concealed from Qasim both the numbers of those interned and the treatment which some of them were suffering. At the same time Qasim issued an order revising the crop sharing under the Agrarian Reform law in favour of the landlords and curtailed the duties of the Popular Resistance Forces

to training. The Baghdad Police Chief, another reputed Communist, was relieved of his duties. The result of these developments was increased hostility between the National Democrats and the Communists and increased attacks by the Communist Press on Qasim's policy, if not on Qasim himself. The nationalists began to raise their heads again and the Communists regularly complained of murders of Communists in the countryside, no doubt in revenge for what the Communists had done at the height of their influence after the Mosul revolt.

7. The failure of the Communists at this stage did not cause them to change their policy. On the 28th of June they issued in the form of a memorandum to Qasim the Charter of the National United Front, an alleged Alliance between the Political parties and various associations under Communist leadership demanding freedom for political parties, the establishment of a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution, and participation in the Government. It contained an electoral programme promising widespread economic and social benefits, to which the National Democrats could easily have subscribed. The signatures included many non-Communists who signed under pressure, the dissident members of the National Democratic Party who had disagreed with the freezing of political activity, and certain members of the Kurdish Democratic Party allegedly representing that party. The National Democrats reacted violently against this. They claimed that this was nothing but a Communist Party manoeuvre, that those who signed for the National Democratic Party were a small minority and that those who signed for the Kurdish Party had been removed from it. On the 5th of July Qasim gave a Press conference and made a speech to a gathering of the Popular Resistance Forces. He attacked the Communist Press for publishing false reports. He asserted that he and his associates were responsible for the revolution. He emphasised the necessity for individual rather than collective freedom. He stated categorically that he had never been and was not a member of any party. He reiterated that there should be no political parties during the transitional period and he emphasised firmly that there would be no National United Front during it. The police stopped Communist agents canvassing for signatures for the charter in the streets.



8. Although Qasim cannot yet be said to know much about the normal business of running a country, he is emerging as a much stronger personality than could have been believed a few months ago. He has grown in self-confidence after a year of power, and is showing signs of beginning to realise the basic requirements for the maintenance of law and order. He now seems to have woken up to the increasing dangers of the situation and decided to take charge, though he is clearly trying to avoid driving the Communist Party underground and still offers them the chance of co-operating with him. He still holds to his basic political idea of revolutionary freedom in contrast to pre-revolutionary repression, though he has already deviated from it under the stresses of the post-revolutionary situation. He is thus in something of a dilemma, since it seems likely that he will be able to maintain his power only by a form of military dictatorship, and that there will come a time when he must either give way to the Communists or be prepared to take firm action against them. They have already been driven underground in the Army. They are strong and show no signs of giving in. The main struggle is probably yet to come.

9. Up till May, Qasim kept himself afloat with the aid of the Communist Party and defeated nationalist attempts to unseat him. Now a gap appears to have opened between him and the Communist Party. But in spite of his policy of conciliation,

he cannot turn to the Pan-Arab nationalists for support so long as relations between him and Nasser remain as bad as they are. There are provocations on both sides. Nasser seems to be maintaining his essential hostility to Qasim, perhaps in the fear that even if Qasim beats the Communists and consolidates his own power, he will prove a rival pole of attraction which will prevent union of the Arab world under Egyptian influence. Qasim can therefore rely neither upon the Pan-Arab nationalists nor upon the Communists. The National Democrats do not by themselves provide a very effective backing. Qasim's prospects seem to depend upon his ability to conciliate and obtain the support of the moderate Iraqi nationalists, who have become disillusioned with Nasser. In these conditions of instability the Government show little sign as yet of being able to tackle the many problems before them. Beneath the veneer of national rejoicing on the occasion of the 14th of July, there is social and economic confusion. It may be some time before Iraq achieves a relative stability and it is by no means certain in whose hands the power will rest when that stability is achieved.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Cairo, Kuwait, Moscow, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Washington, Karachi, the Political Office, Middle East Forces in Cyprus and Basra.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

EQ 1015/417

No. 17

### THE NEW IRAQI CABINET

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received July 14)*

(No. 954. Unclassified)  
(Telegraphic)

Baghdad,  
July 14, 1959.

A Republican decree dated the 13th of July announced the formation of a new Cabinet. The changes are as follows:

Dr. Talat al Shaibani—Minister of Planning, instead of Minister of Development.

Dr. Naziha al Dulaimi—Minister of Municipalities.

Awni Yusuf—Minister of Works and Housing.

Dr. Feisal al Samir—Minister of Guidance.

Abdul Latif al Shawwaf—Minister of Commerce.

Dr. Ibrahim Kubba—Minister of Agrarian Reform and Acting Minister of Oil.

Mohammed Hadid to be Acting Minister of Industry as well as Minister of Finance.

Dr. Hassan al Talabani to be Minister of Communication instead of Communications and Public Works.

2. It appears that remaining Ministers are unchanged.



EQ 1015/420

No. 18

## THE NEW IRAQI CABINET

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received July 14)*(No. 955. Confidential)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
July 14, 1959.

My immediately preceding telegram: New Iraqi Ministers.

Following are notes on the new Ministers.

- (a) Dr. Naziha al Dulaimi, Secretary of the President's League for Defence of Women's Rights; founder member of Iraqi-Czechoslovak Friendship Society; signed the National Unity Front Charter; she is a gynaecologist who has recently given up her practice to devote herself to improving the lot of women in Iraq. She claims that the league is a non-political organisation.
- (b) Awni Yusuf; President of Kirkuk Appeal Court; member of the purge committee in the Ministry of Justice; signed the N.U.F. Charter.
- (c) Abdul Latif Al-Shawwaf; formerly President of the Grain Board; founder member of Iraqi-Czechoslovak Friendship Society. Brother of the Minister of Health and Colonel Shawwaf, leader of Mosul revolt.
- (d) Dr. Feisal al Samir; formerly Director-General of Education; President of Teachers' Association; founder member of Iraqi-Czechoslovak Society; signed N.U.F. Charter.

2. (a), (b) and (d) are probably fairly far to the Left, but have no evidence that any of them is a member of the Communist Party. I hope to comment further on the changes in a few days.

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EQ 1015/425

No. 19

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received July 16)*(No. 963. Confidential)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
July 16, 1959.

My immediately preceding telegram: Iraq Internal Situation.

The following is an estimate of Qasim's present political position.

2. Qasim has never been against Communism as such. He does not want to get into Nuri's position of ruling by suppression of the Left. His political aim seems to be to obtain co-operation of all parties in some sort of presidential system under his personal control. He does not want an open breach with the parties which would mean failure of his basic policy and a split in the country with an increase of disorder.

3. Inclusion of three civilians of known Leftist, probably Communist sympathies in the Government may also be regarded as a step in Qasim's policy of balance following the release of Nationalists detained after the Mosul revolt and his recent differences with the Communist Party. Qasim may also be reacting against comments in the Western Press suggesting that, with the aid of the National Democrats, he is engaged in a battle with the Communists. His distrust of the Nationalists will have been increased by the establishment of Free Iraqi Bureau in Cairo and using Cairo Radio to broadcast the bureau's attempts to dissuade Arab officials from attending the 14th of July celebrations.

4. Although the new appointments increase the number of Leftists in the Government, the major departments are untouched except by the welcome removal of Kubba from Commerce and prospectively from Oil. The changes need not be interpreted as a marked swing to the Left. Qasim continues to invite co-operation of Communists, but he has not given way to any of their demands nor is there any evidence that he has moved from the positions he has taken up in the last few weeks.

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EQ 1961/34

No. 20

## JULY 14 CELEBRATIONS IN IRAQ

*Mr. Hayman to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received July 27)*(No. 91. Confidential)  
Sir,Baghdad,  
July 23, 1959.

I have the honour to report that the first anniversary of the Iraqi revolution was celebrated from the 14th to the 20th of July in Baghdad, and for a somewhat shorter time in other important cities in Iraq. The programme of the Baghdad celebrations is at Appendix A.<sup>(1)</sup> A list of some of the principal delegations is at Appendix B.<sup>(1)</sup> The United Kingdom delegation was led by Her Majesty's Ambassador. It included Sir Fergusson Crawford, K.B.E., C.M.G., Head of the Middle East Development Division, and Mr. Philip Adams, the Regional Information Officer in Beirut.

2. In all the celebrations the emphasis was on Iraq's future rather than on the past. This confirmed the assurance which the Minister for Foreign Affairs gave to Her Majesty's Ambassador beforehand that nothing would be included to embarrass any visiting delegation. The only event which might possibly have caused embarrassment was the opening of the "July 14th Exhibition". This event was not attended by the United Kingdom delegation.

3. The celebrations included a military review and a graduation ceremony at the Military Academy on the 14th of July (when the Prime Minister made his main political speech (fully reported in telegrams from this post) and the Popular Procession on the 15th of July.

4. The military parade provided some evidence of Iraq's policy of "balance" in the arming of her forces. Two columns moved past the saluting-base and these consisted of units equipped with British, American and Russian equipment, the majority of which appeared to be Russian. There was also a fly-past of Venoms, Vampires, Hunters and MiGs. All this was very like the May Day parade in Belgrade. It was interesting to see units of the Popular Resistance Forces of both sexes sitting stiffly and in uniform in trucks at the end of the procession.

5. The Popular Procession on the following day lasted for seven hours. All this time a long line of men and women carrying banners representing all the elements of Iraq's life passed slowly in front of General Qasim applauding him as heartily as the crowd which ebbed and flowed around his tribune. The largest units in the procession were the trades unions and the peasants—there was evidence of some careful stage managing by the Communists when they marched past—but the main impression was of a great mass of people out to enjoy themselves and to acclaim Qasim. The Prime Minister certainly enjoyed it all. When he was not acknowledging the greetings from the procession he was either shaking hands with various men, women and children who somehow got into the tribune or, as a good military officer, was personally directing the control of the crowds that surged round him.

6. During the rest of the week the Prime Minister was indefatigable in opening housing estates, a model village and other social institutions, laying the foundation stone of Baghdad University and opening an impressive students' hostel. In all this the Government was of course appropriating credit which was due in large part to the work or decisions of the pre-revolutionary Government. Indeed, this part of the programme followed very closely the pattern of the Development Weeks of the period before the revolution. But at least some of those who watched the Prime Minister visiting the new model houses for officers, N.C.Os. and civilians and the other brand new buildings in and around Baghdad must have thought that these clean, well-built dwellings had been conjured out of the ground by Qasim's magic.

7. The Prime Minister carried out the crowded programme, which included a large number of evening parties, without any apparent fatigue except at the end.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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Although he and his advisers must have been worried by events taking place in Kirkuk and elsewhere, this was not allowed to mar the festivities. Certainly there was no diminution in the applause which General Qasim himself received every time he appeared—and he did not miss a single item in the programme.

8. The main impressions of the week's programme were as follows:

(a) they provided a striking demonstration of the Prime Minister's personal popularity in Baghdad. There was no doubt that Qasim himself thoroughly enjoyed the adulation which he received. He was relaxed and cheerful when returning the crowd's greetings, although in the more formal surroundings of an evening party he is by nature stiff and reserved:

(b) the Government will gain some credit from the efficiency with which the crowded programme, the first of its kind since the revolution, was carried out. To a newcomer to the Middle East it seemed inevitable on the 13th of July that arrangements would be chaotic, but thanks to the energy of Brigadier Ali Ghalib Aziz, the Commander of the Fifth Division who was Chairman of the Festivities Committee, and miracles of improvisation, everything went off smoothly. (One senior Foreign Office official confessed that he had personally fixed up the fans in front of the diplomatic tribune at 4 a.m. on the 14th of July, an hour or two before the military parade began);

(c) the Government naturally exploited to the full the practical achievements of the Development Board and has taken the credit for the buildings and other projects planned and begun by the pre-revolutionary Government;

(d) there was some efficient stage-managing by the Communist-controlled trade unions in the Popular Procession and elsewhere and many of the banners, decorations and cultural entertainments reflected Iraq's ties with the Eastern bloc, but for the most part Communist activity was not in evidence. The intention in the celebrations was obviously to salute Qasim and "a new Iraq", the political pattern of which has still to emerge. Despite Kirkuk and disturbances elsewhere the Government can claim that their aim was largely achieved.

9. It would be wrong to exaggerate the importance of these celebrations but, if it is true that the main struggle within Iraq is still to come, their modest success may have given Qasim and the Government some help at a time when it is sorely needed.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Cairo, Kuwait, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Washington and Karachi, and to the Political Officer with the Middle East Forces in Cyprus.

I have, &amp;c.

P. T. HAYMAN.

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EQ 1015/503

No. 21

# AN ANALYSIS OF IRAQI COMMUNIST POLICY AND OF THE PRESENT UNEASY SITUATION IN IRAQ

Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received September 14)

(No. 101 S. Confidential) Baghdad,  
Sir, September 10, 1959.

I enclose the full text of the report<sup>(1)</sup> of the enlarged session of the Iraqi Communist Party held in mid-July 1959 and a memorandum prepared in this Embassy analysing it. This is an important document which throws considerable light upon the history of the Iraqi Communist Party since the revolution and upon its present policy. There seems little doubt that after the Shawwaf revolt in March 1959 the party considered that they must press their advantage in order to obtain a dominant position in the State from which they could not be dislodged. However they overplayed their hand or, in the Communist jargon, were guilty of Left-wing deviation. Their campaign to force Qasim to include representatives of the party in important Ministries in the Government, their proposals for a National Unity Front and constitutional reform under their auspices by which they hoped to steal the thunder from Qasim's own proposals made a few weeks later on the 14th of July, their plots in the Army, their preparations for conspiracy in the "democratic organisations" and the disturbances which they inspired or promoted in Kirkuk and other parts of the country, all served to give Qasim notice that the Nationalists were not the only contenders for power and that he would have to take action against the Communists if he wished to keep his position. By these actions the Communists lost much of their support in the country and the Nationalists were encouraged to an extent which would have seemed impossible only a few months before.

2. The present document is of a type familiar to the students of Communist parties in other parts of the world. The party now freely admits its mistakes and advertises a change of policy which would appear to the outsider to be far better adapted to the situation and likely to be far more successful. Qasim has always aimed at holding the balance between the parties

and obtaining their co-operation. If the Iraqi Communists now carry out a more moderate and restrained policy as outlined in this report, they will encourage Qasim in the hope, which he seems never to have abandoned, that he can obtain their genuine co-operation. But whether in fact they will exercise this restraint is open to doubt. There are indications in the document of a struggle for power going on in the party and it is by no means certain that those responsible for the new policy will retain their position unchallenged.

3. Meanwhile, although measures by the Military Governor against Communist front organisations continue, Qasim has not succeeded in conciliating the Nationalists, but has again gone out of his way to advertise his suspicions of them. One can only deduce from his recent statements and actions that he believes that the pan-Arab Nationalists are again plotting against him. They probably are. He has chosen to display his new move in the balancing act by the trial of the senior officers implicated in the Mosul revolt and by an unequivocal statement of support for the major anti-Nationalist figure in the régime, Colonel Mahdawi, then under attack by the Nationalists, coupling this statement with veiled accusations of subversive Nationalist actions. The danger to his personal position of his policy of balance is that he strikes at each side in turn and may find himself with the support of neither.

4. Communist tactics are now again to declare their support for the Republic under Qasim and for a national front with other "patriotic" groups. They are much less crude than in early July when they issued the National Unity Front charter, but their hope is still clearly that they will be able to dominate all Left-wing and Centre political forces in the country and to suppress the Right wing. They have temporarily abandoned the direct assault on the seat of power for more indirect methods. Meanwhile, they realise the necessity for consolidating their base. The main conclusion

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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of the party report is that their primary task is to strengthen the party's relations with the masses.

5. A party which has the courage to admit its mistakes and completely to reassess its policy may prove a more formidable enemy than in the time of its early successes before its recent setback. Much Iraqi opinion appears to consider that it is still losing support and has no real chance of dominating a predominantly anti-Communist country. Those who hold this opinion doubtless under-estimate the chances of a small well-organised minority attaining power in the long run against the wishes of the non-Communist majority. But after the events of the last few months it will not be easy for the party soon to approach again the high point which it reached in the spring. What would help it most would be another ineffective Nationalist plot. It would be rash to assume that the Nationalists will not oblige.

6. I am sending copies of this despatch, with memorandum only, to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Cairo, Kuwait, Moscow, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Washington, Political Office with the Middle East Forces in Cyprus, Karachi and the United Kingdom delegation to NATO.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

Enclosure

*Memorandum on the Report of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party*

Towards the end of July 1959, the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party held an "enlarged session". A report was prepared at this session, a summary of which appeared in the *Iraqi Review*, the weekly English language supplement to *Ittihad al Sha'ab* on August 6. The full report was published in the *Iraqi Review* of September 6.

2. The report is a sharp indictment of the policy and organisation of the Iraqi Communist Party since the July revolution. The Central Committee makes little attempt to conceal its mistakes and criticises all ranks of the party from the Central Committee downwards. The justification for these mistakes are the usual and often repeated

references to the activities of imperialists, reactionaries, &c. There is also a panegyric about the four months campaign at the end of last year when "vast numbers of the sons of the people" joined the party. Because it was not possible to educate and train them in party doctrines this led to some mistakes, caused partly by the "dizziness" of the party's victory. The self criticism of the Central Committee falls under three heads, each of which deserves some comment: faulty political assessments by the party, misapplication of party doctrines, and organisational deficiencies.

3. The report admits that the party's greatest mistake in its political assessments was that it had failed to interpret correctly the role of other national forces in the revolution. (Reading between the lines, it is possible that the strength of those forces had also been under-estimated.) The forces referred to here are presumably those of the National Democratic Party, perhaps the United Democratic Party of Kurdistan and, in general, "independent patriots" of no party. Further, the Communists had failed to pay sufficient attention to the middle class and, far from having found a *modus vivendi* with it, had succeeded only in estranging it. In like manner, by their over-zealous policies they had also estranged the Government behind whose backs they had on occasion tried to work. Apart from these criticisms of a general nature, the Central Committee singled out several points where its political assessments had clearly been at fault. The most important of these were the decision in April 1959 to press for the inclusion of Communist Ministers in the National Government, and the formation of the National Unity Front in June 1959. The broad basis of criticism was that the party had tried to force the people and the Government to accept what they, the party, wanted. It is interesting that the Communist newspaper *Ittihad al Sha'ab*, receives its share of castigation for having "handled some events with undue passion".

4. The main and most revealing charge with respect to the misapplication of party doctrines is abuse of the principle of collective leadership. According to the report, this "great Leninist principle" was violated and collective leadership was replaced by individual control with its accompanying evils. Although we have no confirmation, it seems most likely that the target of this attack was Abdul Qadir Ismail al Bustani, the editor of *Ittihad al Sha'ab*

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and perhaps the most forceful of the leaders of the Iraqi Communist Party. Other points, on which Marxist-Leninist teachings had been ignored, were on criticism and self criticism, mutual supervision, purging the ranks and ensuring "democratic" rights to party members.

5. As regards party organisation, it was clear from the beginning of the revolution that the party had grown in numbers out of all proportion to its organisation. Before the revolution the party was small (perhaps 1,500 members in Iraq), close-knit and well organised, although, even then, it lacked competent leadership. With the onset of the revolution, the party grew at an enormous pace numerically. But cadre members were scarce and they were unable to cope with the large numbers of enthusiastic amateurs, who came flocking in for training and education. The report points out that this need for training had to be met at the same time as the party was engaged in innumerable other tasks. The failure in organisation led to "unrestrained excesses" on the part of many of its members. Here perhaps the party is pointing a self-accusing finger at its behaviour in Kirkuk? The statement goes out of its way to condemn acts of violence, plunder and murder. The fact that these had been committed by people who called themselves Communists, and who probably were indeed so, caused the party a serious loss of reputation and estranged it even further from the Government, the middle classes and the masses. The statement contains another important organisational point, which has an ominous ring. It is said that, while the party was so enthusiastically expanding, its secret organisation had nevertheless to be fully maintained.

6. In connexion with the party's examination of its organisational problem, the statement gives an interesting summary of the development of party activities since July 1958. At first, there were two months of practical stagnation until the September meeting of the Central Committee. Then perhaps as a result of the deliberations of that meeting there was an upsurge of activity and recruitment. This lasted for four months and its results were so overwhelming that, at the end of this period, the party had to stop receiving nominations so that a more equal balance could be struck between the quality and the quantity of new members. This slowing down period lasted a few months—one may guess until the Mosul revolt—and was then succeeded by a

fresh increase in activity culminating in Kirkuk, and the subsequent "agonising reappraisal" of its position.

7. The intentions of the party in issuing this very frank report are not altogether clear, but it seems likely that, having renounced its past errors, it wishes to reassure the people about its future policy. This reassessment seems to have gone on simultaneously with, and not as a result of, the strong anti-Communist measures which were taken in the period after Kirkuk. It was perhaps, the Kirkuk riots and the revelations made during the police raid on the Students' Union on July 21 which brought the Communist Party finally to realise that it had over-reached itself and must change its tactics. How far this decision was based on advice from Moscow it is impossible to say. The party is, no doubt, anxious that its new policy should be published well in advance of the trial of the Kirkuk criminals so that it can maintain that these men may have called themselves Communists, but were insufficiently trained and educated in the true party doctrines.

8. The party has always been split by internal dissensions either on questions of policy or personality. The present change of front, whether it has been determined by Moscow or decided locally, may have been caused by these dissensions. As a result of the change of front some of the dissensions may be healed. The Central Committee's statement seems to show that the party's moderate group has gained the day. We had been reliably informed that the two main pre-revolutionary factions of the Communist Party had been recreated—the Qaidah group and the Rayat al Shaghilah group. There appear also to have been some defections from the party, particularly in Kurdistan where the United Democratic Party of Kurdistan had virtually declared its independence. The most notable known defectors from the Central Committee members in Baghdad were Khaluq Amin Zaki and Selim Ghani al Chalabi and it was rumoured also that Amir Abdullah and Zaki Khairy were dissidents either within or now outside the party. A significant mention in the report of Titoist revisionism, which manifested itself in Iraq as "Arab Communism", may refer to one or more members of this group. It seems likely that the Secretary-General, Hussein al Radi alias Salam Adel, is now in full control, and that he is responsible for the party's "moderate" new look.

9. The change of front may well make the party in the long run an even more dangerous force in Iraq than in the past. Its future policy may be closer to the classic formula of minority Communist parties, involving attempts at co-operation with the Government, the use of front organisations, penetration of key positions in the Government, in the army and in other political parties and the build-up of an efficient clandestine machinery. Before the revolu-

tion the Iraqi Communist Party showed on many occasions that it thrived on persecutions and had the strength to survive internal dissensions. Although the party has suffered loss of prestige and popularity, it has, no doubt, retained much of its basic strength and, with the adoption of new and more realistic policies, will certainly continue to play an important and dangerous part in Iraq.



EQ 1461/12

No. 22

## A REPORT ON AGRARIAN REFORM IN IRAQ

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 5)*(No. 107. Confidential) *Baghdad,*  
Sir, *October 1, 1959.*

As requested in Eastern Department's letter of the 14th of August, I submit a brief report on agrarian reform in Iraq. It is based on a discussion with Dr. Ibrahim Kubba, the Minister of Agrarian Reform, and on talks with officials in the Departments concerned and with Major Nocton, the remaining British agricultural expert.

2. The Agrarian Reform Law No. 30 was ratified on the 30th of September, 1958. Its main features are set out in the annex to this despatch. The main outlines of the scheme are sensible enough on paper. The owner is left with a reasonable amount of land and he is to be compensated in the manner customary under such legislation in other countries. The land taken from him is to be distributed to the peasants on a basis which takes into account the productivity of the land and other features. In the past the landlord provided the seed, the water and implements, and arranged the marketing of produce. In the landlord's place user co-operatives are to be formed to fulfil the same functions. The Law provided for an orderly transitional period, during which the old owner would continue to cultivate his land until the new arrangements for it could be made. But in the 12 months since the Law was ratified much confusion has been created and the intentions of the Law have been distorted by politics, inefficiency and the disorders of a revolutionary situation. For political reasons the first step has been to requisition land, and the amount so far requisitioned is possibly six million donums (about four million acres), but only a little of this has been distributed to the peasants, certainly not more than 200,000 donums, and no co-operatives have yet been organised. For several months internal security in the countryside virtually collapsed. Many landlords were attacked as wicked reactionaries, and some, not knowing whether either the Government or the peasants would let them harvest their crops, left their land before even it was requisitioned. Some peasants took possession of land which they

hoped to get but which had not been allocated to them, often being unable to do more than graze the standing crops. The district authorities were powerless to check the disturbances or restore order. The existing peasant-landlord relationship in Iraq has thus broken down before anything has been got ready to put in its place and as a result of these chaotic conditions this year's harvest was not more than 50 per cent. of the normal. It would be illusory to suppose that this situation can be quickly remedied and with a shortage of acclimatised seed in addition to all the other difficulties, the prospects for next year's harvest are very poor indeed.

3. It was apparently intended that the Peasants' Associations should play an important part in preparing the way for agricultural reform. Any prospect of this has however been prevented up till now by the influence of politics upon them. They have been a battle-ground between Communists and non-Communists. The Communists have tried to gain control of them and use them as a base for the organisation of the Party in the countryside. The National Democrats have been striving to prevent this and have in some measure succeeded. As part of the Government's anti-Communist measures at the end of July, the Associations were temporarily frozen. At the beginning of September a new Law was passed giving responsibility for licensing the Associations to the Ministry of the Interior and the Mutsarrifs. It remains to be seen whether the Associations as now reorganised will be able to fulfil any constructive role in land reform.

4. Dr. Ibrahim Kubba was appointed Minister of Agrarian Reform in July. He is a Left-wing politician with plenty of energy and drive. As an economics teacher he did not impress those qualified to judge his performance. However, he is a forceful personality and he has as one of his principal associates Dr. Mohammed Salman Hassan, recently Secretary of the Development Board, who, while strongly Left-wing in politics and full of violent emotional prejudice against the past, is an able

economist with an Oxford background. The Minister seems to realise the problems he is up against, but he is without practical experience and, as Minister of Economics, he has had a depressing record of obstinacy and unwillingness to learn or even to see things for himself.

5. I went to see Dr. Kubba on the 12th of September. The following notes are mainly based on what he told me.

(a) *Co-operatives*

They are to be the central feature of the whole scheme. They will be "user" not "producer" co-operatives. The peasant will own his land but will make use of the co-operative to obtain seed and agricultural implements, and to market his products. These "user co-operatives" are meant to provide the services which used to be provided by the landowners and they are probably the best way of doing this. But Dr. Kubba admitted that it would be a long and difficult task to organise them; they could not be organised until the land had been distributed, though he hoped that the Peasants' Associations would prepare the way for them. He was quite clear in defining the co-operatives as not including the features of a Communist agricultural producer co-operative. But I should not put too much reliance either on the honesty of his exposition or on the clarity of his mind. The Soviet Union and China are among the countries to which co-operative trainees are to be sent and Dr. Salman Hassan made it fairly clear in a recent conversation with me that the present Government policy is, in his mind, only the first stage.

(b) *Distribution of land*

The amount available for distribution appears to be 11 million donums out of a total cultivated area of 24 million donums. This will not provide enough land for all the previous farm tenants, but those who do not get land will continue to work as tenants of land-owners who still retain their legal quota of land. Dr. Kubba admitted that great difficulty had been caused by over-hasty expropriation for political reasons. Proper distribution would be a long and difficult job. Inevitably they would have to proceed piecemeal. Disputes over land distribution, which were many and complicated, would have to be resolved in the Courts.

(c) *Irrigation*

This will be one of the main problems. The co-operative will be required to organise for its members the distribution of water from the main channels to which the water is taken by the Irrigation Department. A Dutch engineer who is engaged on a big irrigation project on the Euphrates told us the other day that there was the utmost confusion over irrigation in the area in which he was working.

(d) *Departmental responsibility in Baghdad*

At present there are three Departments concerned, the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Social Affairs, which has so far had the responsibility for co-operatives in general. Dr. Kubba agreed that this was a ridiculous overlapping of functions and, as in so many cases, a committee was "looking into the matter".

(e) *Foreign experts*

Eighteen Soviet agricultural technicians are already working in Iraq. Dr. Kubba thought, sensibly enough, that with these functions, they ought to be attached to the Ministry of Agriculture instead of to his own Department. It was, however, he himself who arranged for their recruitment for land reform when he negotiated the Iraqi-Soviet Union Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement. Another 34 Soviet experts with 10 translators were being recruited to help establish Government seed multiplication farms, the first of which would be completed, Dr. Kubba said, within the next few months in the north of Iraq. (Local opinion in Mosul is nothing like as optimistic about the early establishment of this farm.) Foreign experts would be required from other countries. Dr. Kubba took note of my reference to the Middle East Development Division in Beirut which might provide advice if needed, for help.

(f) *Bad harvests*

After making various excuses about the shortage of rain, Dr. Kubba admitted that the greatly reduced harvest was partly the result of the unsettlement and confusion during the past 12 months. (This has been freely admitted in the Press.) When I asked him whether the tremendously difficult task of introducing a new agricultural system into Iraq could be accomplished



as planned in five years, he said that it was too soon to say.

6. Discussion with Departmental officials and with Major Nocton confirms my own view that although Dr. Kubba's professed plans are probably on the right lines he has hardly begun to grapple with his problems on a practical basis. It is too soon to make any but tentative comments, but I would summarise my views as follows:—

- (a) The Government do not at present intend to introduce a Soviet *bloc* type of agricultural economy in Iraq. The co-operatives are to be genuine "user co-operatives" with each peasant owning a small piece of land. But all will depend on the outcome of the struggle for political power in Baghdad.
- (b) It is no easy task to organise the Iraqi peasant into co-operatives which will have to undertake a number of complicated duties. The co-operatives will need much supervision and control in the early stages. For political reasons the Government cannot make use of the landlords or their managers and it will be difficult to find people with sufficient education and administrative experience to run the co-operatives or enough competent officials to supervise them. It will be years before uneducated Iraqi peasants, who have worked under landlords' orders, can become responsible peasant proprietors and members of user co-operatives.
- (c) For political reasons the distribution of land has proceeded much too fast and this, coupled with the anarchic state of the countryside in the first year of the revolution, has caused great confusion.
- (d) At present Soviet technicians do not occupy key positions in the agricultural field. But more foreign experts may be needed and, given Dr. Kubba's own political beliefs, many more of them may well come from the Soviet *bloc*.
- (e) There will almost certainly be a greatly reduced harvest next year also and it may take some years to get back to the pre-revolutionary output. During this time the country will have to be a heavy importer of wheat. But Iraq could afford to import wheat to cover shortages for several years.

7. The breakdown in the agricultural system is one of the most serious problems facing the Government. The present chaos in the countryside must lead to much poverty and distress. More people than ever will come to the towns where there is already unemployment. These conditions could provide a fertile field for Communist exploitation, although the prominence of the Communist Party in the last 12 months and its often proclaimed identification with the revolution, has perhaps led many peasants to regard the party as responsible for the distress which they suffer, despite the promises of the millenium to come. The situation cannot be remedied until agricultural reform has been completed. It is in principle a necessary reform and there can be no going back on it now. The Government's plans are sensible enough on paper, but I have serious doubts whether they have either the experience or organising ability to carry them out satisfactorily in the near future.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Beirut (with an extra copy for the Development Division), Moscow and Washington, and the Political Office, Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

#### Annex

#### *Main features of the Agrarian Reform Law No. 30 of 1958*

1. No person should own more than 1,000 donums of irrigated land or 2,000 donums of rain fed land, (a donum = 0.62 of an acre).
2. Land-owners would receive compensation for all land confiscated and all fixtures, trees, pumps, &c. taken over. Compensation would be by means of Government bonds cover bearing 3 per cent. interest to be redeemed in not more than 20 years. In the case of land owned jointly by the Government and the land-owner, compensation would be paid for the percentage of land privately owned.
3. Peasants receiving land would be granted not less than 30 donums and not more than 60 donums of irrigated land and not more than 120 donums of rain-fed land, the amounts granted depending on the

fertility of the land. Priority would be given to those who had actually cultivated the land in any capacity.

4. The peasant receiving land would pay for it over a period of 20 years, with the addition of annual interest of 3 per cent., plus a sum not exceeding 20 per cent. of the value of the land to meet the cost of distribution and administration of the expropriated.

5. Special courts were set up to settle disputes arising out of the expropriation and distribution of land, and the distribution of crops.

6. Distribution of land was to be completed within five agricultural years following the date of enforcement of the law.

7. If it was proved that any person had failed to cultivate land for a period of three years prior to the enforcement of the law, or for one year or more after its enforcement, the land could be confiscated.

8. Co-operative societies could be set up under the law, membership of which if compulsory to those receiving land and voluntary for all others. The main functions of the societies would be:—

- (a) obtaining agricultural advances;
- (b) supplying the necessary seeds, cattle, machinery, &c.;
- (c) regulating the cultivation of the land;
- (d) marketing the crops for the account of their members;
- (e) providing its members with the necessary social services.



EQ 1102/10

No. 23

## THE DETERIORATION OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN IRAQ

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 5)*(No. 109 E. Confidential) *Baghdad,*  
Sir, *October 2, 1959.*

In the past six weeks the economic situation in Iraq has been causing increasing dissatisfaction among all parties and sections of the community and there has been a growing tendency to doubt the Government's ability or willingness to grapple with the country's economic problems. The issue on which criticism has been focused is the rise in prices and the dangers of inflation. Unnecessary import restrictions have led to shortages, there has been a serious harvest failure, business is depressed, development work is running down as old contracts near completion and there are reports of considerable unemployment.

2. The administrative organisation on the economic side is singularly weak, particularly for a Government intent on new policies. Mohammed Hadid, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Industries is able but over-worked, Nadhim Zahawi, Governor of the Central Bank, is a complete cypher, and Talaat Shaibani, the former Minister of Development who is now Minister of Planning, has given no signs of constructive thinking during his eight months in office. Ibrahim Kubba, formerly Minister of Economics and now acting Minister of Oil and Minister of Agrarian Reform, is the most energetic Minister on the economic side but he has undoubted Communist sympathies and very little knowledge of economics. Following the purges, officials are reluctant to take responsibility and as bottlenecks in the administration increase, there is a growing evidence of the return of corruption, which was prevalent under the old régime but ceased immediately after the revolution. Moreover, far too many Ministers and officials are going abroad on long trips instead of getting on with the job of administering the country.

3. There is no doubt that the present economic malaise has contributed to the decline in confidence in Qasim's leadership. At the same time it would be wrong to exaggerate its seriousness. With one exception the country's economic problems

are not beyond the scope of fairly simple remedies if the Government have the courage to apply them and can create an atmosphere of confidence and stability.

4. The exception is agriculture where the situation is very serious as I have reported separately in my despatch No. 107 on land reform. Partly because of drought but mainly because of the virtual breakdown in normal agricultural activity which has resulted from land reform, the harvest has been only 50 per cent. of normal years. Up to half a million tons of wheat is being bought abroad. Barley, of which Iraq is normally a substantial exporter, is also being imported as well as greater quantities of rice than in previous years. The Government seem to have acted quickly enough to forestall any failure in supplies, at least in the towns, and wheat prices, which in mid-September were 25 per cent. above the pre-revolutionary level, have now begun to fall. The cost of the harvest failure in terms of foreign exchange will be about ID.15 millions. Iraq can afford this, probably for even a few years, but not indefinitely. There are some who predict that next year's harvest will be worse than this year's and it will certainly require a remarkable feat of organisation to bring agricultural production back to pre-revolutionary levels.

5. The run down in development work results mainly from the Government's understandable but costly desire to break with the policies of the old régime. They have reduced the share of oil revenues allocated to development from 70 per cent. to "not less than 50 per cent.", and claim that they will still be able to do the same amount of development work as before because the old régime spent money wastefully. The old régime is also accused of having failed to draw up a properly co-ordinated development plan based on a full study of the country's resources, of having kept Iraq backward by using her foreign exchange reserves to import manufactured goods instead of capital equipment for industry and of having spent too much on large basic projects such as roads and dams and not enough on the immediate

improvement of amenities in the form of housing, &c. Young economists in the Government are now beginning to recognise that the order of priorities established by the old régime was sound. But until now the Government have wasted time on the assumption that everything had to be re-planned. After a year no new plan has been announced, although a five or six year programme is reported to be before the Council of Ministers. The only large projects which have been offered for tender since the revolution are ones which were sponsored by the old régime. On the other hand the administrative machinery has been reorganised so that there is now a Central Ministry to co-ordinate planning, and responsibility for execution is devolved on individual functional Ministries. In the long term this may be an improvement, but the immediate effect is simply increased administrative muddle.

6. The new Government also decided to be tough with contractors, particularly foreign firms whom it regarded as having made fortunes at the expense of the Iraqi people under the old régime. Since the revolution many contractors have found themselves losing money because of increased labour costs and other factors beyond their control. The Government has so far resisted making any adjustments in favour of the contractors although two cases are under consideration. The contractors' difficulties have been aggravated by inordinate delays over payment. The labour situation has now improved. Trade Unions, after a period of virtual suspension, are beginning to re-emerge. British contractors report them and local "works committees" as reasonably co-operative. But as a result of the inflexibility shown by the Government over the last year, few contractors are willing to tender for new work and those who have tendered have quoted very high figures to insure themselves against possible loss. Only two tenders were received for a contract worth about six million dinars and none for a group of contracts worth ID.9 millions. Nor have the Communist countries shown any eagerness to tender except at prices above those bid by contractors from Western countries. There are now signs of increasing awareness in the administration that they must do something to encourage Western contractors to tender for new work and there is a chance that things may improve. The Government cannot delay too

long as their policy to date has caused serious unemployment in the contracting industry and in the industries which depend on it.

7. In their efforts to foster industry the Government have tried to do too much, too fast without any proper planning and so far they have achieved nothing. This is largely due to the misguided energies of Ibrahim Kubba when he was Minister of Economics. For planning purposes, industry has been divided into three categories; heavy industry, which will be almost entirely in Government hands at least in the initial stages, medium-sized industry like textiles which will be partly Government and partly private enterprises, and small plants which the Government hope will be operated entirely by private firms.

8. For the first two categories, the Government arranged in March to get substantial aid from the Soviet Union under the Iraq-Soviet Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement which provides for Soviet assistance in the form of equipment and advice for 25 projects including 13 industrial plants. Kubba seems to have rushed the Government into this agreement and when it was signed the economics of most of the plants had not been studied. Site investigation for some of the industrial projects is in progress, but no contracts have yet been signed and there are reports that some may fall through. For the third category of industry some Communist countries, with Kubba's encouragement, have offered complete sets of equipment for some hundreds of small plants which it was thought the Government might purchase and sell to private concerns. Many of these offers were made without reference to the needs of the market or to the conditions in which the plants would operate. There is now some realisation that these factors should have been studied as a first step and some possibility that the Government will in future proceed on a more logical basis and invite competitive tenders. The wealth of Iraq could probably be better promoted if the Government went slow on industry and concentrated on developing their very great agricultural potential. For reasons of national pride, however, and the need to combat unemployment it may well prove politically difficult for the Government to stick to a suitable pace.



9. Import policy was keyed in with the policy of developing industry. In March the importation of certain goods (mainly consumer goods) was banned and on others restricted by quota either to protect local production or because the goods in question were considered luxuries and therefore not in keeping with the spirit of the new régime. In many cases the industry which the restrictions were designed to protect did not exist or was quite unable to meet total demand. Many of the so-called luxuries proved to be essential for important sections of the population. As a result, there have been over the last few months growing shortages with consequent increases in prices. The situation was aggravated by the inefficiency of the import licensing machinery, by attempts to force certain of Iraq's trading partners to buy more Iraqi goods by withholding import licences and by largely unsuccessful attempts to give a larger share of trade to the Communist countries, who before the revolution exported very little to Iraq. Fortunately after much criticism in the Press, the Government has at last faced up to the facts and decided to relax some of the restrictions and to try to speed up the whole machinery of import licensing. It is too early to assess the results of this policy.

10. Business has suffered from all this confusion. It is difficult to generalise about this. It is remarkable how in Iraq certain trades flourish in relatively unstable and difficult conditions. Figures for the United Kingdom exports to Iraq for this year, which are so far only slightly less than last year, are evidence of this. Demand for certain goods continues to be good, but there is no confidence in the market and business people are unwilling to plan ahead. Confidence was growing steadily after the July 14 celebrations but Qasim's speech on August 13 supporting Mahdawi and the various developments since then, which I have reported, have given public confidence a shock from which it has not yet recovered. Few if any Iraqis with money are willing to invest, either in expanding their own businesses or in the new industries to which the Government attach importance. Apart from the question of confidence many Iraqi business people have found that, despite the lip service paid by the Government to the importance of national capital they have been expected to make concession after concession to labour and with these and other difficulties they have had

great difficulty in paying their way. Business people are also seriously concerned about the dangers of inflation. The note issue has gone up 40 per cent. since the revolution largely as a result of increased wages, which for some unskilled labourers are now about 80 per cent. above the pre-revolutionary figure, and increased salaries and bonuses for Government employees. Prices have, however, probably so far risen less than these increases and the relaxation of import restrictions should now have a beneficial effect.

11. In the general atmosphere of muddle and uncertainty it is not surprising that reports should circulate that the Government is in serious budgetary difficulties. There are many rumours heard in Baghdad that the Government are seeking a large foreign loan, generally believed to be from the United Kingdom. These reports may well have been started by Cairo Radio with the object of discrediting the Iraq Government. The Minister of Finance has assured me his budget is not in difficulties and I understand that the International Monetary Fund Mission which visited Iraq recently was satisfied with what it found. At the same time I think the budget is likely to come under strain during the financial year. An influential young economist in the Government told me that after originally opposing the Soviet credit he was now glad of it as "revolutions are expensive". It is known that expenditure in the first six months of 1959 on both the state budget and development accounts exceeded revenue by ID.10 millions and this trend is likely to continue. The original estimate for the state budget envisaged a deficit of ID.9 millions and on the expenditure side there will be additional charges for new Ministries, salary increases for civil servants and probably for some form of subsidy for peasants because of the harvest failure. Revenue will be down as the Government may get less from oil than they estimated and customs receipts will suffer from import restrictions. I would regard a deficit of ID.20 millions for the year as a whole as quite likely. This should not prove unmanageable, but I.P.C. may come under increasing pressure to provide more money for the Government either by adjustment of costs or by deferment of repayment of the 1956 loan.

12. In all economic fields Iraq has been learning the hard way and has had to pay

for it. But although the economy is in a distinctly worse state now than before the revolution, I do not think that it is at present in serious danger. Its essential strength—assured foreign exchange income from oil—remains unimpaired and the foreign exchange reserves at the end of July were, at ID.117 millions, only slightly less than at the end of 1956. How far Iraq's revenue from oil will increase in the future depends on the degree of good will which the Government show to the oil companies and on the future world market for oil. But if the oil companies' present development plans go ahead, Iraq's oil revenues could double in the next three years.

13. In short, Iraq is probably one of the few under-developed countries in a position to indulge in the economic extravagances of the past year without doing herself serious harm. But she cannot continue in this way for too long. Unless there is some recovery in business and development activity, mounting unemployment may soon create a serious political problem for the Government. Ministers are still far too inclined to believe that the present difficulties are caused by the sins of the past, in particular foreign exploitation of Iraq under the old régime, and to mislead public opinion accordingly. Nevertheless, steps taken to reverse import policy gives some ground for hope that the Government is learning its lessons. The sector in which

they could do most to improve economic activity quickly is development, if they have the political courage to take measures which will attract foreign contractors back to Iraq. In the private sector, experience has shown that business can pick up very quickly, but a real improvement, with investment on the scale which the country needs, will require a longer period of stability and confidence than Iraq has so far had since the revolution. Whether this will be forthcoming depends on development of the political situation. In the meantime I do not think there should be any change in our commercial policy towards Iraq. We are still justified in looking beyond the difficulties of the present to the potential strength of the Iraqi economy and I consider that we should continue to do all we can to ensure that we keep a large share of this market. Fortunately British goods and British consultants and contractors are still highly regarded here.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Washington, the Middle East Development Division at Beirut, Commercial Relations and Exports Department of the Board of Trade, H.M. Treasury, the Bank of England, and Export Credits Guarantee Department of the Board of Trade.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.



EQ 1015/543

No. 24

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 6)*(No. 1374. Secret)  
(Telegraphic)Baghdad,  
October 6, 1959.

Three people have been sentenced to death for murders in Kirkuk disturbances and two for murder of a schoolmaster at Ain Tamr. The condemned men are probably all Communist small-fry. Twenty-seven railway officials are on trial in the first martial court on a charge of torturing and intimidating other employees in the department. The principal accused is the traffic manager, Nuri Raphael, an old Communist who fought in Spain.

2. Faiq Samarra, Ahmed al Ajil the Shammar chief, and nine others who fled to Syria after the Mosul revolt are to be tried *in absentia*. I expect that trial will be a staged attack on the U.A.R. and will be held in the People's Court under Mahdawi.

3. Rumours of contemplated plots against Qasim are rife. He still seems to be confident. He recently told my Turkish colleague that his Intelligence was so good that he knew everything that was being done against him both in and outside Iraq, whereas he had completely destroyed British and American Intelligence systems. He still goes on unadvertised trips without a guard, though he was heavily guarded on his return from the Chinese party on the 1st of October. Although he has not slept in his house for some weeks, the arrangements are such as to make it impossible to know whether he is there or not.

4. It is probable that most of the workers in Baghdad support Qasim and the Communists in a rather confused way, whereas many of the peasants are at least temporarily on the other side. Educated civilians apart from the Communists seem to be generally now against him, while the opportunists are wavering waiting to see which way things go. It is very difficult to gauge opinion in the army, but a recent Iraqi estimate is that many of the officers are against Qasim while most non-commissioned ranks support him.

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EQ 1015/545

No. 25

MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM Mr. MACMILLAN TO  
MAJOR-GENERAL QASIM, PRIME MINISTER OF IRAQ*Mr. Selwyn Lloyd to Sir Humphrey Trevelyan (Baghdad)*(No. 1737. Unclassified)  
(Telegraphic)Foreign Office,  
October 9, 1959.

Your telegram No. 1402 [of the 9th of October].

Please arrange for the following message to be delivered to General Qasim:

Please accept my congratulations on your fortunate escape from serious injury and my good wishes for your speedy recovery.

HAROLD MACMILLAN.

2. Please report by telegram when the message has been delivered.

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EQ 1015/557

No. 26

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE IRAQI POLITICAL SITUATION IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE ATTEMPT ON THE LIFE OF GENERAL QASIM, PRIME MINISTER OF IRAQ**

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 12)*

(No. 113. Confidential)  
Sir,

Baghdad,  
October 8, 1959.

I wrote the following despatch on the 7th of October. On the same evening there was an attempt to kill Qasim in which he was injured. It is impossible yet to assess the results of this attempt, though it may well have the effect of again increasing the power of the Communists and of pushing Qasim further to the Left. I send this despatch as an assessment of the situation up till the 8th of October, an assessment which may soon require radical revision in the light of development following the attempt on Qasim and the consequent increase of internal instability in Iraq which must be expected.

2. In my last despatch on the internal situation in Iraq written in the first half of July, I was able to record a definite improvement in the situation since the spring when the Communists had been taking full advantage of the opportunities given to them by the failure of the Mosul revolt. Qasim was beginning to hit back at the Communists who were losing much of their support in the country and it seemed that he was engaged upon a policy of conciliation. I wrote at that time that his prospects seemed to depend upon his ability to conciliate and maintain the support of moderate Iraqi nationalists who had become disillusioned with Nasser. Qasim's relations with Nasser had not actively improved but there appeared to be the prospect of a truce, with Nasser toning down his propaganda against Iraq and Qasim a few days later making Nasser an offer which could be interpreted by the hopeful as having a slight resemblance to an olive branch. The struggle for power between Communists and anti-Communists was then developing. I suggested that this struggle would last for a considerable time and that it was by no means certain under what leader Iraq would in the end achieve relative stability. But it seemed on the evidence of Qasim's position at that time that he had some chance of achieving that stability under his leadership.

3. In the last three months the position has again changed and the prospects of stability now seem further away. The essentials of the situation are still the same. The struggle for power is going on. Up till now Qasim has given the impression of still trying to hold a sort of balance, his public position in soccer terms having been roughly inside-left. But his chances of remaining leader with the goodwill of the majority of the country are much diminished and his policy of conciliation of the moderate nationalists has broken down.

4. There have been good features in the situation. The developments of July and early August have in some respects been continued. Official action against the Communists and their organisations has continued. The Popular Resistance Forces at the moment are in suspense, although Colonel Mahdawi clearly hopes to revive them. The Communists have been checked and their power to some extent diminished in the Government departments, in at least one of the professional associations, that of the lawyers, in the peasants' associations and even in the trade unions. The anarchy of the spring has disappeared. Internal security has been restored through most of the country, except perhaps in parts of the Kurdish mountains, and the district officials and the police, under anti-Communist direction, seem to be well in charge. The Communists have still been losing support and the Minister of Finance told me recently that in his opinion it would be difficult for them to regain, at any rate in the near future, the high point of popularity and power which they reached in the spring. Some of the Communists who committed murders in Kirkuk and elsewhere are being tried and executed. The National Democrats in the Government now seem to be convinced that any form of front with the Communists would lead to their annihilation. The Communists having failed in their aggressive policy are now

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sitting back, though their new prudence may well be more dangerous in the long run. The anti-Communists have recovered to some extent from their demoralisation and there is more freedom of speech than has been heard in Iraq for many months. The Nationalist Press, though it has recently suffered some at least temporary casualties (a rather ominous development), is still appearing and outspokenly attacking the Communists. It can be deduced from the Communist Press that the Communists no longer dominate the countryside by terror and in many parts the anti-Communists have been taking their revenge under the benevolent eyes of the police.

5. Yet beneath this facade of improved security the situation is dangerous. In the last three months the gulf between the Nationalists of all types and the Communists has widened and feelings have become bitter. The two parties face each other, as it were, from their own strongholds. Parts of the country and some quarters in Baghdad are strongly Nationalist and Communist sympathisers find it impossible to live there. In other parts, particularly Baghdad, the Communists are strong, although they do not seem to have such an exclusive monopoly of certain areas in the country as the Nationalists. To some extent this development would have happened in any case after Qasim's actions against the Communists and the resulting improvement in Nationalist morale. But the dangers of the situation have been greatly increased by Qasim's own actions from the middle of August. The two principal National Democrat Ministers in the Government confirm explicitly what was implicit in Qasim's speech of the 13th of August that at that time he received information of fresh Nationalist plots against him with the support of the United Arab Republic. It is of course impossible to say how much truth there was in these reports. We do not know what they were. There was at that time doubtless a good deal of vague talk of plots, but it is unlikely that any serious action against the régime was then imminent. In any case, Qasim again felt the danger from the extreme Nationalists to be greater than the danger from the Communists and retaliated against the Nationalists by ordering the trials in the People's Court of the last batch of alleged Mosul rebels including the popular senior officers, Brigadier Nadhim Tabaqchali and Colonel Rifaat al Haj Sirri. Mahdawi was let loose again on propaganda against the United Arab Republic and the propaganda war between the two countries flared up. The consequence was a great increase of instability in Iraq, a considerable loss to Qasim of his moderate Nationalist following, and at least the temporary end of the prospects of effective consolidation of the army and moderate opinion behind him.

6. After the sentences of death passed in this trial there was a general belief in Baghdad that things might become easier. The dissenting verdict of two of the judges of the People's Court gave Qasim an opportunity to commute the sentences and the hated President and Prosecutor of the Court, Mahdawi and Majid Amin, were due to leave for the 1st of October celebrations in China. The execution of 13 officers, including Tabaqchali and Sirri, and four members of the old régime therefore came as a great shock in Iraq, having the effect of further widening the rift between the Nationalist and Communist elements and of increasing the bitterness felt by many who had suffered, or whose relations and friends had suffered, at the hands of the revolutionary Government. It is probable that Qasim's actions were primarily a move in his war against the pan-Arab Nationalists and Nasser. He was, we have been told, greatly affected by the murder at Beirut airport of the former employee of the U.A.R. Embassy in Baghdad who was coming to give evidence against Colonel Sirri in the People's Court. Tabaqchali was one of his most likely rivals and he seems to have felt it necessary to hit at the Nationalists and Nasser hard in order, as he said to one of his friends, that he should not suffer the fate of the Caliphs Ali and Othman, both of whom suffered violent deaths. The execution of four members of the old régime was certainly pleasing to the Communists who regarded them as the chief instruments of Nuri's anti-Communist policy, but their inclusion was probably principally caused by Qasim's desire to avoid the imputation irresponsibly made by Cairo propaganda that he was executing the Nationalists but not the old imperialist traitors.

7. Up till the 7th of October Iraq was in a period of uneasy calm. It had become apparent to most people that the revolution had been very expensive and had brought in material terms only the prospects of distress in the winter, the holding up of development and economic stagnation. The crops were down by

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50 per cent and agriculture was totally disorganised through the mistakes in the execution of the programme of agricultural reform and the results of months of virtual anarchy in the countryside. Qasim has kept himself in power by hitting first at the Nationalists and then at the Communists and now at the Nationalists again, but as a result finds himself with much diminished support. There has been a general loss of confidence in him as a leader and a growing feeling among non-Communists that his balancing act is tilted appreciably towards the Left and that he employs a double standard of judgment and policy in favour of the Communists and to the disfavour of the anti-Communists who are prepared to support a neutralist policy independent of both the Communists and Nasser. An increasing number are prone to believe that he is Communist at heart, if not by card. The general feeling is that he may well maintain himself in power for some time, but that he is not likely to be acceptable for a long period as the leader of the Iraqi people. It is impossible, however, to prophesy how the situation will develop. The political scene in Iraq changes radically in brief periods and the Iraqis' allegiance to one side or the other is fickle and short-lived. There seems no prospect of stability until there is at least some sort of truce between Iraq and the United Arab Republic and conditions of instability are likely to persist for a long period. Until the 7th of October, at any rate, the Communists seemed to have lost the chance of being able to take over power in the near future, though they are always to be reckoned with as a long term danger to Iraq. Whether the attempt on Qasim's life will materially increase their immediate chances again, remains to be seen.

I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Beirut, Cairo, Kuwait, Moscow, Teheran, Tel Aviv, Washington and Karachi, the Political Officer of the Middle East Forces at Cyprus, and Her Majesty's Consul-General at Basra.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

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EQ 1017/27

No. 27

## THE TRIAL AND EXECUTION OF THE MOSUL REBELS

Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 19)

(No. 116. Confidential) Baghdad,  
Sir, October 14, 1959.

On the 8th of March, 1959, Colonel Abdul Wahhab al-Shawwaf, Commander of the Fifth Brigade in Mosul, rebelled against the Government. The revolt was crushed on the following day. A full account of these events was given in my Despatch No. 32. The trials in the People's Court of those alleged to be responsible for the revolt lasted until September. These trials, particularly the last one which resulted in the conviction and execution of Brigadier Tabaqchali, Colonel Sirri and two other officers, have played such an important part in what has gone on in Iraq during the last four months that it is worth giving a detailed account of the proceedings in the last trial. This at Annex A.<sup>(1)</sup> A full list of those tried and the sentences carried out on them is at Annex B.<sup>(1)</sup>

2. Qasim has told me that he regards the People's Court as a political forum for educating public opinion in Iraq in the period after the revolution. The People's Court has indeed been used as a vehicle for political propaganda both at home and abroad. At home it has been used to boost the Government's authority particularly against the Nationalists. Abroad it has been used to carry on the propaganda war against President Nasser and the United Arab Republic. The Tabaqchali trial coming at the end of the five other Mosul trials fulfilled both these purposes. I have suggested in another despatch that its timing was dictated by Qasim's interpretation of the political situation. He wanted to aim a blow at the Nationalists and to discredit the United Arab Republic at a moment when he was convinced that further Nationalist plots were being hatched against him. He was convinced that Tabaqchali and his associates were plotting in conjunction with Cairo to overthrow him. He wanted to teach Nasser a lesson and at the same time to remove two powerful Nationalist figures who, even in prison, would have remained symbols of resistance

to him. Tabaqchali and Sirri were possible alternatives to Qasim. This is why they were tried and executed.

3. The proceedings of the People's Court have become notorious, a fact recognised by all educated Iraqis. The bullying of witnesses and accused by Colonel Mahdawi and the Public Prosecutor, Colonel Amin, the allegations of torture of witnesses which have been substantiated and the whole atmosphere of the Court have made many people in Iraq thoroughly ashamed. But, taking into account the special circumstances which exist here the sentences passed in the first five Mosul trials at least were probably justified on the evidence. Those executed had clearly taken an active part in the revolt and any military dictatorship would probably have acted in the same way. In many cases there were remissions of sentences and there were signs of a less vengeful attitude than might have been expected.

4. Nevertheless the effect of the Mosul trials, culminating in the death sentences carried out against Tabaqchali and Sirri, has probably done more than anything else to arouse Nationalist feeling in Iraq, and undermine Qasim's personal position. Both Tabaqchali and Sirri were very popular in the army. They were members of Qasim's group of revolutionary officers and Tabaqchali belonged to a cell whose other members were Colonels Abdul Salam Arif and Tahir Yahya. They had been helping to plan the revolution since the middle of 1956. They have now been raised to the status of martyrs in the eyes of many Nationalists. Moreover, the Court's failure to make a convincing case for the imposition of the death penalty, the allegations of torture and the fact that two of the judges dissented, made the carrying out of the executions questionable. But even if the case had been clear cut, Nationalist opinion would still have been outraged. Bitterness, and a desire for revenge have been created,

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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and even allowing for the fickleness of Arab emotions, the feelings aroused by the executions are not likely to be quickly forgotten.

5. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman,

Ankara, Beirut, Bahrain, Cairo, Kuwait, Moscow, Tehran, Tel Aviv, Washington, Karachi, POMEF and Basra.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

EQ 1015/545 (1)

No. 28

**MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM MR. MACMILLAN TO MAJOR-GENERAL QASIM, PRIME MINISTER OF IRAQ**

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 26)*

(No. 117. Unclassified)  
Sir,

Baghdad,  
October 20, 1959.

I have the honour to report that in reply to the message of good wishes conveyed in your telegram No. 1737 of the 9th of October, I have been requested by the Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs to transmit the following message from Major-General Qasim to the Prime Minister:

"I received your kind congratulations with profound gratitude and appreciation. I sincerely wish you health and happiness and it gives me pleasure to congratulate you on your resuming the office of Prime Minister."

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

4. Nevertheless the effect of the Mosul trials culminated in the death sentences carried out against Tabaqchali and Sir. It probably does more than anything else to ensure Nationalist feeling in Iraq and undermine Qasim's personal position. Both Tabaqchali and Sir were very popular in the army. They were members of Qasim's group of revolutionary officers and Tabaqchali belonged to a cell whose other members were Colonel Abdul Salam Arif and Tahir Yaseen. They had been helping to plan the revolution since the middle of 1958. They have now been taken to the state of martyr in the eyes of many Nationalists. Moreover, the Court's failure to make a convincing case for the imposition of the death penalty, the allegations of torture and the fact that two of the judges dissented, made the carrying out of the execution questionable. But even if the case had been clear cut, Nationalist opinion would still have been outraged. Bitterness and a desire for revenge have been created.

5. Qasim has told me that he regards the People's Court as a political forum for educating public opinion in Iraq in the period after the revolution. The People's Court has indeed been used as a vehicle for political propaganda both at home and abroad. At home it has been used to boost the Government's authority particularly against the Nationalists. Abroad it has been used to carry on the propaganda war against the West. The Tabaqchali trial coming at the end of the five other Mosul trials fulfilled both these purposes. I have suggested in another despatch that its timing was dictated by Qasim's interpretation of the political situation. He wanted to show a blow at the Nationalists and to demonstrate the United Arab Republic as a model when he was convinced that Tabaqchali and his associates were plotting in concert with Cairo to overthrow him. He wanted to teach Iraqis a lesson and at the same time to remove two powerful Nationalist figures who even in prison would have remained symbols of resistance.

At the same time Qasim gave the impression that he was very much on the side of the Communist world. His despatch was an external question in which those over his shoulder were very interested, and he tried to use Communist propaganda to turn the case into a propaganda victory. In fact to the Eastern bloc and the West alike the trial was only an interesting incident in a long history of internal conflict. The major Western Powers and the United Arab Republic in spite of its momentary attempts to join the internationalist movement, have been in a talking shop since the Western Powers have been at the moment that particular country is needed. Thus the Tabaqchali trial would give the hands of Western Ministers a long look at the Arab world and the Arab world's foreign policy and its internal and external relations. But he would show his foreign Ministers that he would show his foreign Ministers without regard to their domestic situation. He was especially concerned to show the hands of the People's Court. His foreign and internal relations for Foreign Affairs have been to show Western powers that he was not a puppet for the procedure of the Court. He has been little short of the beginning of the revolution and now that he is the Western countries with



EQ 1021/23

No. 29

# AN ANALYSIS OF IRAQ'S RELATIONS WITH THE EAST AND WEST FROM THE 1958 REVOLUTION UP TO OCTOBER 7, 1959

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 26)*

(No. 120 S. Confidential) *Baghdad,*  
Sir, *October 22, 1959.*

When a Westerner asks Qasim about his foreign policy, he invariably produces his stock answer that Iraq will not allow anyone to interfere in her internal affairs and will be friendly with anybody who will be friendly to her. The Foreign Minister's rather more sophisticated version is that Iraq's policy is one of strict neutrality between East and West. Iraq's relations with the East and West will be ultimately determined by the outcome of the struggle for power between Communists and anti-Communists in Iraq. But it is worth while examining how far Qasim's policy was neutral in the period up to the attempt on his life on the 7th of October, 1959. It was not a static position. Various internal influences and pressures affected external relations and the course of those relations has had its effect, if not a deciding one, upon the internal situation.

2. Before the revolution Nuri's policy bound Iraq to the West. There were no diplomatic relations with the Soviet bloc, no one was allowed to visit it, there was little trade with it, and only Western, mainly British, experts were employed. Since the revolution was in part a reaction against this policy of attachment to the West, it was natural that in the initial stages the pendulum should swing well over to the left. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs has remarked, most of his colleagues started by thinking that neutrality meant only getting rid of the West. The Communist countries made full use of their opportunities. They immediately recognised Iraq and opened diplomatic missions in Baghdad. They made favourable offers of arms, economic aid, educational facilities, the provision of technical experts and new outlets for Iraqi products. Most of the British experts, generally under suspicion of being British agents, were dismissed and Soviet experts took their place. Soviet arms soon poured into the country and a Soviet military mission replaced the British mission. Iraqi students started going to the Communist

countries, Iraqi Ministers visiting the bloc in a continuous stream were fêted throughout Eastern Europe, economic and cultural agreements were signed with accompanying publicity, and the Press and public speeches reiterated ceaselessly the benefits obtained from the friendship of the socialist countries. The penetration of Iraqi life by the Soviet bloc was facilitated by the early successes of the Iraqi Communist Party in infiltrating Government departments and professional associations, the entry of Communist sympathisers into the Government and the conviction of the opportunists that the Communist cause was in the ascendant. Within a few months the pendulum was well over on the other side and looked as if it would stay there.

3. At the same time Qasim gave the impression that he was very much on the side of the Communist world. His declarations on external questions, in which, however, he is probably not very interested, are apt to read like Communist documents. In them the free world is apparently equivalent to the Eastern bloc and the wicked imperialists can only be interpreted as referring in varying degrees of intensity to the major Western Powers and the United Arab Republic, in spite of his customary attempts to convince the representative of the Western Power to whom he is talking at the moment that that particular country is excluded from this appellation. He would say to the Heads of Western Missions that Iraq's foreign policy was contained solely in declarations by himself and his Foreign Minister, but he would allow his Ministers without rebuke to make declarations approximating to a Communist policy. He has specifically endorsed Colonel Mahdawi's conduct of the People's Court. Both Qasim and his Minister for Foreign Affairs have tried to soothe Western representatives by saying that he meant to imply by this only his support for the procedures of the Court, but this is hardly convincing. There has been little doubt from the beginning of the revolution until now that he regards the Western countries with

considerable distrust and considers that cordial and close relations with the Communist countries are essential to his position. It would be only too easy to draw the conclusion from his statements and many of his actions, as many indeed have, that he is a real Communist himself. We have indeed heard many stories of his Communist affiliations including his code name, party number and so on, though his own declarations that he neither is nor even has been a member of any party show at least his confidence that there is no evidence to the contrary. But his checkered course during the last year, during which he has held a sort of balance between both sides and has at times taken decided action to check the Communists in their more aggressive moments, seems to make it more likely that he is not wholly devoted to the Communist cause, but is principally impelled by wish to keep himself in power. When that power is threatened by Iraqi Communism he takes a much more independent line, and there are plenty of signs that he neither wishes to withdraw himself totally from connexions with the West nor to deprive himself of the benefits obtainable by a neutral from both sides.

4. In recent months it has come to be realised by many Iraqis that the Communist countries are no paradise on earth and that Communism is not an unmitigated blessing in comparison with Nuri's régime. At home the Iraqi Communists have lost much support through their outrageous conduct, in particular the killings in Kirkuk, and through the general realisation that the much vaunted gains of the revolution in which their influence has been so strong, are not generally observable in terms of advantage to the private citizen. Moreover, increased contact with the Soviet countries has produced its quota of disillusion. Returning Ministers have been heard to comment adversely on the standard of living and the cost of necessities in the Soviet Union in terms of Soviet wages. Returned patients have been heard to observe that they had better have stayed at home. The sick who can afford treatment in England prefer to spend money rather than get free treatment in the East. A marked disinclination to go on courses to the Soviet Union rather than to the West has been noticed in both soldiers and civilians. The Soviet doctors in Iraq seem to have made a fairly poor impression on the Iraqi doctors and even on the fellow-

travelling Minister of Health. Soviet port workers have proved to be of varying quality and their cost higher than that of their British predecessors. Attempts to substitute Soviet for Western medical and other supplies have not met with great success, and the most assiduous Communists in the Department of Commerce have not found it possible to wean Iraqi merchants to any great extent from their old preference for Western goods. The much vaunted trade agreements have amounted to very little. As several Iraqis have said to me, if Nuri wanted to stop people becoming Communists, he ought to have sent half the population to the Soviet Union to see what Communism means in practice.

5. But it would be wishful thinking to believe that there is any likelihood of a revolution towards the old pattern. The natural reaction from the first enthusiasm has brought the pendulum back a little way, but it is by no means back in the middle. The Soviet economic aid agreement is not of a very large amount, only 50 million pounds' credit in a period of seven years, and this period will almost certainly have to be extended before completion of the projects under the agreement. But contracts for wireless transmitters, silos, a small shipyard and three telephone exchanges have already been concluded, and there is no reason to suppose that the agreement will not be substantially carried out. It is still official policy to increase the volume of Iraq's trade with the Soviet bloc and this has already risen considerably. Czechoslovakia has been given a contract for a shoe factory, and is about to open a highly efficient industrial exhibition in Baghdad. Soviet experts, many of them probably very competent, are in Iraq in the ports, at the Daura oil refinery, as agricultural advisers, irrigation experts, railway engineers, electrical engineers and advisers on municipal undertakings like fire-fighting and sewage. Military and civil experts together are probably over 500. About 1,500 students are likely to be going to the Soviet bloc this year. We still observe some official bias in favour of the Communist Missions; witness, for instance, the relative turnout at parties of Communist and Western Embassies. The most important part of the Soviet aid is military. The British Loan Personnel mission numbering about 60 Army and Royal Air Force officers and men has been replaced by a Russian military mission of about 180, mainly employed in assembling



aircraft and weapons and in giving instruction in the handling of Soviet equipment. Large quantities of Soviet arms, including tanks, bombers, fighters, helicopters and artillery, have been bought at heavily cut prices, and although British training methods and organisation still predominate in the Iraqi Forces, the units armed principally with Soviet weapons are in some cases going over to Soviet organisation.

6. At the same time there has been no disposition to cut off connexions with the West. The pull of habit and language is strong, and there is no apparent inclination to look askance at the facilities which the West can offer, provided they do not cost too much. Some desire for political balance is shown in the efforts to negotiate cultural agreements with ourselves and other Western countries as well as with the Soviet bloc. At least 2,000 students, many of them sponsored by the Iraqi Government, are likely to be at Western colleges during this academic year, and the British Council are having more requests for places in British universities and schools than they can meet. At least 290 new students began work in the United Kingdom between January and mid-September. The first official delegation since the revolution is now in the United Kingdom and the visit is being fully reported in the Iraqi Press. In Baghdad the cultural work of the British Council and of the Federal German, American and Spanish Embassies continues, if on a reduced scale, and there are reasonable prospects of a restoration of the Council's work to something approaching its pre-revolutionary standard. The Iraqis are still asking for British doctors and teachers, the few remaining port workers in Basra have been offered extensions of their contracts if they should wish, the principal adviser of the Iraqi Airways is still British and a new agreement is to be negotiated between the Iraqi Airways and the British Overseas Airways Corporation, which may lead ultimately to the return of some British technicians to Iraq. There would be larger numbers of British doctors and teachers were it not for the unattractive financial conditions now offered and the unfavourable terms of the new contract which in effect favours the system of secondment by the Communist bloc of officials in their technical departments of Government. There is still a demand for consulting engineers who are working in Iraq on quite a large scale, British

imports are maintained almost at the pre-revolutionary level in spite of the current economic stagnation, and British banks and other firms are still working with reasonable success in Iraq, although there are signs that their difficulties will increase with the beginning of a Nationalist policy of Iraqi-isation such as has been put into effect in recent years in Egypt. The Iraq Petroleum Company have particular difficulties, both because of the emotional feeling against them as a relic of the past and because they have to deal with the most difficult of the fellow-travelling Ministers. But their importance to the country as providing all the funds for development and a considerable proportion of the funds in the normal budget, is recognised, however grudgingly.

7. Qasim's intentions in the matter of British arms is something of a puzzle. It still seems likely that he genuinely intended to buy them from us, or at least that he wanted to know that he could buy them from us in case of difficulties with the Soviet Union. It still seems probable that more recently he intended to sign contracts for the purchase of at least Canberras and some guns, though as far as we know, he has as yet signed nothing in the six months following our agreement in principle to meet his requests. It was only in the course of the detailed negotiations that the Iraqis seem to have recognised that they are in fact getting Soviet military aid on a very generous scale and that they would have to pay very much more for British arms. There are almost certainly senior officers in the Ministry of Defence who would like to prevent British arms coming in again. But the main obstacle to the purchase is probably the price and perhaps the realisation that with their large imports of Russian arms they have more equipment than they can profitably use in view of the low standard of training and more than in their present budgetary difficulties they can easily pay for.

8. Up till the 7th of October, therefore, the balance was still in favour of the East, but to a lesser degree than in the early days of the revolution. It will continue to fluctuate in accordance with the fortunes of each side in Iraq. If the Communists get control, there is no more to be said. If they do not, there is a reasonable prospect of a neutralist policy being carried out in fact and of the West, in spite of the new com-

petition from the East, being able to maintain close connexions with the Iraqi people, if not with all members of the Iraqi Government. Meanwhile, it is clearly important that the West should hold on to all its contacts and make every effort to maintain and increase its connexions with Iraq to the fullest possible extent.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at

Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Beirut, Cairo, Kuwait, Moscow, Tehran, Tel Aviv and Washington, the United Kingdom High Commissioner at Karachi, the Political Office, Middle East Forces at Cyprus and to Her Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Basra.

I have, &c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.



LR 20/62

No. 30

## FOREIGN OFFICE STEERING COMMITTEE PAPER

## IRAQI-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

## Introduction

This paper attempts to describe the main factors which affect Egyptian-Iraqi relations and to forecast their effect on future developments. It is written on the assumption that there will be no settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute in the foreseeable future.

## Egyptian-Iraqi Relations from the Egyptian Revolution in 1952 to the Iraqi Revolution in 1958

2. From July 1952 until 1955, the new Egyptian rulers were too preoccupied with consolidating their internal position and settling the long-standing conflict with the United Kingdom to pay much attention to Arab affairs. Their prestige in Arab eyes was sufficient to maintain Egypt's predominance in the Arab world, although Iraq, while ratifying the Arab Collective Security Pact, adopted a reserved attitude towards the régime and its leaders. It was not until 1955, when Iraq expressed her intention of joining the Turkish-Pakistani Treaty of 1954, that the Egyptian rulers gave serious attention to their relations with Iraq.

3. Nasser then attempted to dissuade Nuri as-Sa'id from joining the pact. One reason for Egypt's opposition was her desire to keep the Arab world free of foreign commitments and her faith in the Arab League Collective Security Pact. Her other motive was concern for her national interest and her position in the Arab world. An Arab defence policy based on the Arab League would assure the continuation of Egyptian preponderance, whereas an Iraqi alliance with Turkey, Pakistan and the Western world, if consolidated and successful, might well result in the leadership passing to Iraq. In addition, Nasser genuinely believed in neutrality between the two Power blocs, and probably feared that an Iraqi alliance with the Western Powers would readmit them to the Middle East through the back door at a time when the solution of the Anglo-Egyptian dispute had just ensured their departure by the front.

4. Nasser's efforts to dissuade Nuri had no effect and, in February 1955 Iraq joined what was to become known as the Baghdad Pact. Nuri's motive was a genuine fear of Soviet Communism. He believed that only an alliance with the Western Powers could provide an adequate defence and that Arab League policies based on "neutrality" were of no real value. In addition, Nuri suspected that Nasser had "sold out" to the Communists in 1953-54: although there is in fact little evidence that Nasser had any kind of understanding with the Soviet bloc until the autumn of 1955.

5. Nasser interpreted Nuri's action as a direct challenge to Egypt's long-acknowledged predominance amongst the Arabs. It confirmed his belief that the Pact was an attempt to isolate Egypt and to force her into a new subservience to the Western world. Cairo Radio launched an intense anti-Nuri campaign, supplemented by clandestine propaganda from a "Free Iraqi Radio"—a campaign which was maintained until the Iraqi Revolution in 1958, and restarted against the Republican Government by the end of the year.

6. Thus Baghdad and Cairo again became the two poles of competing influence in the Arab world. Externally, Baghdad was supported by the West and Cairo by the Soviet bloc. Cairo also established close relations with the Bandoeng Powers, including India, and with other uncommitted countries such as Yugoslavia, which greatly strengthened her position. In inter-Arab affairs Syria inclined towards a closer alliance with Egypt (a military agreement between the two countries was signed in October 1955) and Jordan towards Iraq. Rivalry between Egypt and Iraq was thus further exacerbated.

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7. The Suez crisis of 1956 was the turning point in relations between the two countries. Nuri as Sa'id had expected and wanted Her Majesty's Government to act against Nasser after the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, which he regarded as part of a plan, concerted with the Communists, to establish Nasser as the leader of Arab nationalism. Nuri had, however, warned against any action in conjunction with or to the benefit of Israel. After Suez his position became almost untenable and that of Nasser—in Arab eyes the victim of Western aggression with Israel as chief partner—became virtually unassailable.

8. The centre of the struggle then shifted to Syria where, in general terms, the Right-wing forces supported Iraq and the Ba'ath-inspired Left wing supported Egypt. The latter, with their programme of Arab union, the support of Egypt and the Eastern bloc, proved the stronger. Iraq lacked the means for intervention. Such pro-Iraqi feeling as existed in Syria was inadequate to outweigh the Egyptian appeal to Arab nationalism and the attractions of Soviet aid, which was then presumed to be "without strings". Furthermore, the movement of the United States Sixth Fleet in April 1957 and the despatch of arms by air to Iraq in September may have tipped the scale, for at least some Syrian nationalists, in favour of the Egyptian and Soviet connection.

9. The Russians seem, however, to have overplayed their hand. By early 1958 the increase of Soviet influence in Syria so alarmed the Ba'ath leaders that they sought union with Egypt as the only means of escaping Soviet domination. Nasser, although perhaps reluctant to add the burden of a faction-ridden Syria to his empire, agreed and in February 1958 the United Arab Republic was formed. Nasser's motives were various. In the first place he could not, if he was going to retain his claims to Arab leadership, afford to reject the Syrian overtures. Secondly, he was anxious to prevent the emergence of Damascus, the third traditional centre of Arab nationalism, as a Moscow-dominated rival to Cairo. The merger also put him in the position of controlling the oil pipeline outlets to the Mediterranean and thus obtaining a potential stranglehold over Iraq, though he probably regarded this more as a bonus than as a main consideration.

10. Iraq's union with Jordan was the natural and almost inevitable consequence. It gave Iraq a foothold in the Levant from which to counter Nasser, and it prevented a possible annexation of Jordan by Nasser. The traditional pattern of inter-Arab rivalry had thus moved a further step forward, from the association of countries with the rival Power blocs in the mid-1950s to the much closer groupings of the contending unions of 1958.

## Iraqi-Egyptian Relations since the Iraqi Revolution of 1958

11. The revolution of July 1958 was a triumph for the forces represented by Nasser-Arab nationalism, "positive neutralism and non-alignment", and radicalism. It did not, however, mean a personal triumph for Nasser himself, who was considered an exponent of Egyptian imperialism by many Iraqi nationalists. Iraq since the revolution has been dominated by the struggle between the Nasserites and the revolutionary Iraqi nationalists, with the Iraq Communist Party in tactical alliance with the latter. The first group want Arab unity immediately and will accept Egyptian leadership, which the second group rejects. The struggle has been personified by General Abd al-Karim Qasim, the nationalist, and by a succession of unsuccessful Nasserite leaders beginning with Colonel Abd as Salam Arif, who was ousted in October 1958 and whose latest prominent adherent was Colonel Shawwaf (killed in March 1959).

12. The contest between these two blocs reflects in Iraq itself the struggle which has previously taken place elsewhere in the Arab world. It has resulted in the Left wing of the nationalists making common cause with the Communists against Nasser's designs (real or supposed) on Iraq. But as the Communists gained strength during the first half of 1959 and there appeared to be a real danger of their attempting to seize power, the moderate nationalists began to adopt a cautiously anti-Communist line, without however, giving any encouragement to the pro-Nasser element.

13. The present situation is therefore that the traditional Middle Eastern Arab Power groupings have re-emerged, with a new factor, international Communism, superimposed on the purely Arab struggle. Soviet Communism seeks to make use of both blocs: of the nationalist Egyptian régime, which suppresses indigenous Communists, and of the Iraqi nationalist régime, which at first gave the

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native Communists complete freedom. Territorially, Egypt maintains her outposts in Syria; Iraq, having dissolved the union with Jordan immediately after the revolution, has retreated to her own frontiers.

#### The Future of Iraqi-Egyptian Relations

14. The future of relations between the two countries during the next few years will depend primarily on:

- (a) internal political developments in each country;
- (b) economic factors; and
- (c) external factors.

#### Internal Developments in Egypt and Iraq

##### Egypt

15. Failure to continue winning spectacular successes for Arab nationalism in his foreign policy would diminish Nasser's popularity. There are, moreover, grounds for discontent with his régime in Egypt itself. Economic difficulties, slowness in raising the standard of living, the corruption of the administration, the lack of political freedom and the exercise of arbitrary powers could all be exploited against him by a military rival, by the Communists, or by some militant revival of the Wafd. On the other hand, those radical and reformist elements of Nasser's programme which have been put into effect, if they have not gained wide popular acclaim, have at least won the allegiance of certain elements, e.g., the lower middle classes, and have provided the régime with something of a political basis. At all events, on the evidence at present available, Nasser's control of the army, the police and the propaganda apparatus is firm enough to enable him to forestall or defeat any attempt at revolt. Short of assassination, which is always a possibility, Nasser seems likely to continue to govern Egypt for some years to come. On this assumption, the two main aims of Egypt's Arab policy will continue to be:

- (a) to maintain, and, if opportunity offers, to extend Egyptian influence in the Arab world;
- (b) to obtain a share of the oil revenues and some degree of control over Arab oil policies.

16. In the past, Nasser's major weapon in the struggle for leadership of the Arab world has been the exploitation of radical nationalism, discontent with the established order, xenophobia, anti-Zionism, neutralism and anti-imperialism. His prestige arises from his having scored successes against Western imperialism which gratify all these feelings and flatter the national pride of the Egyptians. He must maintain his momentum in order to continue to lead the Arab world and further his policies.

17. As Arab solidarity under Egyptian leadership is the ultimate objective of the Arab nationalism which is the basic principle of Nasser's Arab policy, and as any association that excluded Iraq would be incomplete, one aim of Egyptian policy must be to secure at least the co-operation of Iraq. Nasser has evidently decided that there is no possibility of the present Iraqi régime co-operating with him. Unless he is content to wait and see whether the situation evolves in his favour, he must presumably seek by subversion and propaganda to overthrow the régime and substitute one of his own supporters. In doing so he has to contend with:

- (a) the disorganisation of his supporters in Iraq;
- (b) the strength of the Communists and the hostility of the USSR to his policy;
- (c) the strength of Iraqi nationalism and reluctance to allow Egyptian exploitation of Iraq's economy.

18. Nasser's hostility to Qasim's Government and his hopes of overthrowing it were expressed in a violent propaganda campaign in the spring of 1959. The only result was to benefit the Iraqi Communists by increasing tension, and by the middle of the year direct propaganda attacks on Qasim had practically ceased. Intervention by Egyptian or Syrian regular forces is unlikely. It would certainly be condemned by nearly all the other Arab States, and the United Nations would most probably be moved to intervene. Nasser, in such a case, would lose the support of the anti-colonial members of the United Nations and would risk being isolated and branded as an aggressor. He is unlikely to risk this, and equally unlikely to invite any

extension of the United Nations' "presence" in the Middle East. It is, in any case, doubtful whether the Egyptian and Syrian armies are capable of carrying out an invasion of Iraq with any hope of success.

##### Iraq

19. Relations with Egypt will depend on the outcome of the struggle for power now going on among three principal groups, which are absolutely distinct only at their extremes:

- (i) the Iraqi nationalists, represented by Abd al-Karim Qasim himself, perhaps most of the army and probably a majority of the older members of the politically active intelligentsia;
- (ii) the Communists, who are probably a small minority but who control the urban mob and the "Front" organisations of students and professional men and have members, or at least sympathisers, in the army and the Government; and
- (iii) the pan-Arab nationalists, who suffered a heavy defeat in the failure of the Mosul revolt of March 1959, but are still backed by Egypt.

20. Qasim's Government consists of his close military associates, a few National Democrats, who have shown some effectiveness and tenacity in standing up to Communist attacks, and a number of Communist fellow-travellers, only one of whom exercises much influence. Qasim himself professes radicalism. He has announced that political party activity will be permitted from January 1960, and a Constitution promulgated by the end of that year. It is impossible to forecast what degree of political freedom will be accorded or what sort of Government may emerge in these conditions. In the meantime Qasim continues to emphasise that he and the army are above party, and to stress the importance of all individuals, working together under his guidance for the common good. The Communists did much to build up Qasim as the "sole leader", but his popular support is to a large extent independent of them, and by mid-1959 they were becoming openly critical of some of his measures.

21. If Qasim continues in office, either as Head of State or head of the proposed constitutional Government, he will no doubt try to hold a balance between Communists and non-Communists and to obtain support for a policy of social and economic reform and national independence, both political and economic. A Government of this sort would no doubt profess belief in the concept of an Arab nation and would seek to resume formal good relations with Egypt and participate in the Arab League. It would have no difficulty in reconciling theoretical Arab nationalism with a practical policy of protecting Iraq's sovereignty and national economic interests. Such a Government, by reason of its radicalism, and especially if it were able to show progress in industrialisation and social welfare, would command wide prestige among the intelligentsia of Syria, Jordan and the Arab Peninsula, and would thus constitute a more serious rival to Egypt than did the "reactionary" Governments of the monarchy. But, given the preoccupation of Qasim's Government with political problems, it seems unlikely that much progress will be made in economic and social reform for a long time.

22. Nasser's attacks on the régime probably offended many moderate Iraqi nationalists. More importantly, they assisted the Communists by creating an atmosphere of tension and excitement in which they could claim that the republic was in danger and demand the arming of the mob, and the participation of the party in the Government. Qasim, however, yielded little or nothing to Communist demands. The inclusion of four fellow-travellers in the Government fell far short of their demand. On the contrary, he brought the Popular Resistance Forces under army control, and he is now perhaps more assured of the army's loyalty to himself and its control of the country than at any time since the revolution. The danger of a Communist coup, which appeared imminent in the spring of 1959, had considerably receded by the middle of the year. The seizure of power presumably remains the Communists' objective in theory, but their tactics now seem to be to achieve that end through a gradual build-up of their strength. If they came to power Iraq would no doubt conform to the pattern of a Soviet satellite. There is a possibility, however, that, in the long run, the Arab character and ignorance of orthodox Marxism-Leninism might produce a deviationist party, perhaps more on the Chinese than the Titoist model, or even peculiarly Arab. The Communists would, if only in self-defence, liquidate the pan-Arabists and seek to advance the Communist



cause in other Arab countries. They would clash with Nasser on three grounds: their dependence on or subservience to a foreign Power; their opposition to the forces working for Arab solidarity which he represents; and the attempt they would probably make to extend into what Nasser regards as his sphere of influence (although Soviet policy might direct the subversive effort of a Communist Iraq towards Iran rather than the Arab countries). It is unlikely that Nasser would ever reconcile himself to a Communist Iraq, but the régime might be made tolerable for many Arab radicals by being camouflaged under some form of National Front with a show of participation by other parties, and by the Iraqi Communists professing zeal for Arab solidarity.

23. It is improbable that the pan-Arab nationalist group of Nasser's sympathisers will obtain power, for the reasons given in paragraph 17. Nor is it likely, now, that if they did obtain power they would seek to promote an early union with the U.A.R. Such a union would, like that with Syria, have the weakness that when the immediate danger of a Communist counter-coup had receded, Iraqi regional nationalism would reassert itself. Traditional hostility to Egyptian pretensions, the racial and religious separatism of the Kurds and Shi'as, and resentment of Egyptian exploitation of Iraq's economy, would all nourish opposition to the union. The Kurds in particular would be hostile to a pro-Nasser coup and, with Soviet support, might renew their demand for an independent Kurdistan.

24. These alternatives assume the extreme case of one of the three groups' achieving a complete victory over the others. In practice no development is likely to be so clear-cut. The present uneasy equilibrium is more likely to continue; and the possibility cannot be excluded of further attempted coups against Qasim by rival soldiers, not necessarily pro-Nasser. Whatever combinations of forces may appear and disappear in the course of the struggle for power, the history of democratic institutions in Iraq does not give much ground for believing that the promise of free and constitutional government on party lines will be fully and lastingly carried out for a long time. Relations with Egypt will reflect the fluctuations of the internal struggle, being at their best, possibly, under a military government with a strong National Democrat element in it, and at their worst under a Communist-dominated government. In neither case would the declarations of the leaders in each country necessarily express their true intentions or constitute any guarantee against a sudden *volte-face* in foreign policy. Nor would the violence of previous polemics render it impossible to mend the breach, formally at least, if Nasser were to become convinced of the inefficacy of his present line and try to come to terms with Qasim.

#### Economic Factors

25. Nasser's primary task is the consolidation and economic development of the United Arab Republic, not only for the realisation of the domestic aims of the revolution, but as a contribution to the part that Nasser believes Egypt should play in achieving Arab solidarity. Egypt's over-population (an increase of half a million people annually) and her persistent balance of payments deficit make it imperative for her to increase her productive capacity. The development required is on too big a scale for the resources of native capital. Nasser has sought loans from both East and West—for the Aswan High Dam and for the Suez Canal; and he has invited (even if his actions have not encouraged) private foreign investment in Egyptian industry. Arab nationalism would, however, prefer to exploit, as much as possible, sources of capital that are under Arab control. While the conception of a single Arab State in which the revenues of the oil-producing regions are applied to the development of the whole remains a dream, realisable, perhaps, in the remote future, Nasser may well hope to obtain a share of oil revenues through some more modest schemes of inter-Arab development organisation. His control of oil transit routes already enables him to share in oil profits to some extent, and it is obviously in his interest to seek such a position of influence among the Arab States as might enable him ultimately to influence Arab oil policy in a manner favourable to Egypt's economy. Nasser's championship of Arab solidarity arises from ideological conviction as well as from calculation of the possible benefits to Egypt, but like other Arab nationalists, he appreciates the role that the Arabs' possession of oil resources may play in the eventual creation of the United Arab State.

26. Although Iraq could in the longer term use all her oil revenues for her own needs and in the event may well wish to do so, this does not exclude the possibility of her making some of them available to other Arab countries if she

wanted to. One way in which this could be done would be through an Arab Development Organisation, if an effective one were ever established. Such an organisation need not necessarily be dominated by Egypt: if there were to be an association between Egypt and Iraq in any such scheme, the influence of Iraq's oil wealth might counter-balance Egypt's physical and political weight.

#### External Factors

27. The chief external factors that affect relations between Egypt and Iraq are:

- (a) Soviet interests in the Middle East;
- (b) Western interests, and
- (c) the attitude of the other Arab States.

28. In its broad aim of extending its influence over the Middle East, Soviet policy makes use of two principal means. First, the exploitation and anti-Imperialist (*i.e.*, anti-Western) feeling among the Arabs and the substitution of Soviet for Western influence through trade, loans, arms sales and technical assistance. Second, the fostering of Communism and the encouragement of the local Communist Parties to obtain control of popular front organisations and infiltrate the administrations and armies of the new revolutionary governments. The USSR has employed the first means in Egypt, and both means in Syria and Iraq (where it has now received some check).

29. The effect of Soviet intervention in the Middle East has been to sharpen the traditional competition between Egypt and Iraq and to exacerbate still further relations between Nasser and Qasim.

30. These effects are likely to continue for as long as the USSR maintains an active interest in Arab affairs and as long as the present régimes, or similar ones, continue in Egypt and Iraq. But, while it is fairly clear that Soviet policy does not favour any early union of the Arab States (at least under bourgeois régimes), it would equally not suit the Russians if rivalry between Iraq and Egypt reached the stage where one of them began to look to the West for support against the other. Neither would an outright break with Russia suit Nasser; and it is possible, therefore, that if he could arrive at a *modus vivendi* with Qasim (which assumes that the latter would have overcome the local Communist threat), Nasser might well wish to give his relations with the Soviet Union an appearance of greater cordiality than they have had since the end of 1958.

31. The effect of the Western Powers' policies on Egyptian-Iraqi relations depends largely on the view that Nasser takes of Western intentions. He has grown up in the conviction that Great Britain is and always will be the villain of the piece, and the popular conception of British Imperialism as the principal enemy of Arab Nationalism is too good a propaganda theme to be discarded. However, now that direct British interference is no longer a reality, or even, perhaps, since 1956, a danger, both Nasser and Qasim may become more open-minded about British policy. Nasser, for example, took a reasonable view of the British offer of arms to Iraq at the height of his propaganda campaign against Qasim. However, there is little prospect of the leaders on either side seeking such close relations with the United Kingdom as would substantiate a charge of collusion with Imperialism. British relations with Jordan and our influence in the Persian Gulf and Aden provide both sides at need with propaganda material, but do not seem in practice to affect the specific dispute between Iraq and Egypt; though our relations with Jordan or Kuwait would assume considerable importance for Iraqi-Egyptian relations if either side attempted to engineer a coup in one of those States.

32. Any demonstration of interest by the Western Powers in the dispute itself would probably exacerbate it. Iraqi Communists already accuse America of encouraging Nasser, and the accusation is widely believed by non-Communists. The Iraqi Communists claim to be as good Arab nationalists as any other Arabs, and would seize on any evidence that America supported Nasser's anti-Communist line as additional ammunition in the propaganda battle. The Imperialist nature of Western interest in the Middle East is so much taken for granted by the Arabs that it is probable that the hostile response to any overt move that the United States might make in the present dispute would prevent its having the effect intended.



33. The attempts of the other Arab States to mediate in the dispute, such as that of the Sudan in March and the Arab League in April 1959, have had no effect to make each side the more determined to stick to its guns. The Iraqi Communists seem to have opposed mediation and participation in the League meeting because continuance of the present tension suits their plans. It is probable that the Arab League States will now wait for tempers to cool before any of them again attempts conciliation, although they would perhaps make another attempt if there were any suggestion of United Nations or other non-Arab intervention.

#### Conclusions

34. While the situation in Iraq is so fluid definite conclusions are difficult to draw. In general, however, it seems that:

- (a) The traditional Iraqi-Egyptian rivalry for pre-eminence in the Arab world will continue. It will fluctuate in intensity according to the character of the régime in each country. Relations will probably be at their worst when a preponderantly Communist Government is in power in Iraq. A military-nationalist coalition strong enough to dominate the Communist Party might seek an accommodation with Egypt, provided Iraqi sovereignty were safeguarded.
- (b) Nasser may have ruled out the possibility, and perhaps the desirability, of a union between the United Arab Republic and Iraq, but the aim of his policy towards Iraq will be to secure an anti-Communist Government there which will co-operate with Egypt and yield to Nasser at least the moral leadership of Arab Nationalism.
- (c) In furtherance of this policy, Nasser's or any similar Egyptian Government will seek to bring about a friendly Government in Iraq by any means short of regular invasion. Propaganda attacks and unsuccessful subversion, however, assist the Iraqi Communists by creating an atmosphere of tension and danger which they will try to exploit for building up their strength and obtaining a decisive influence over the Government.
- (d) Even if a friendly Government came to power in Iraq, however, Iraq's regional national and possibly her economic interests would militate against the permanence of any association with Egypt in which Iraq was subordinate.
- (e) A radical, non-Communist Iraqi Government, carrying out a programme of industrialisation and social welfare, would command greater prestige among the Arab intelligentsia than any former Iraqi Government, and so constitute a more serious rival to Egypt. Genuine concern for Arab solidarity might make such a Government desire good relations with Egypt (see sub-paragraph (a) above), but not at any cost to its own economy or political prestige.
- (f) Economic factors play a secondary role in the dispute. A share in Iraq's oil revenue would not solve Egypt's economic problems. Nasser, nevertheless, will probably work, in the long term, for some kind of economic association with a friendly Iraqi Government. He appreciates the possibilities of exploiting the Arabs' possession of oil for political purposes, and will nourish the hope of achieving a position from which he can exercise some measure of control over Arab oil policies. Iraq is likely to continue to suspect Nasser's political motives in any scheme for inter-Arab utilisation of oil revenues that he may support. But she would not necessarily refuse to participate in an Arab Development Organisation if any effective and genuinely inter-Arab one were ever established.
- (g) Soviet policy, aiming at the substitution of Russian for Western influence in the Middle East, and selecting the method of creating Satellite régimes independent of each other but dependent on the USSR, conflicts with Nasser's Arab policy. The more the Iraqi Government lends, or appears to lend itself to Soviet policy, the worse its relations with Nasser's Government will become. On the other hand, if Nasser and Qasim came to agreement, it would probably suit Egypt as well as the Soviet Union to restore to their relations the appearance of cordiality which has been somewhat impaired since December 1958.

- (h) Any action by the Western Powers that could be construed as an attempt to intervene in the dispute between Iraq and Egypt would probably exacerbate it.
- (i) The other States of the Arab League are likely to wait for tempers to cool before making another attempt at conciliation.

Research Department,  
Foreign Office, S.W. 1.



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No. 31

## CRISIS IN THE DATE GROWING INDUSTRY IN BASRA LIWA

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received December 7)*

(No. 128 E)

Sir,

Baghdad,

November 27, 1959.

I enclose a copy of despatch No. 3 of the 22nd of October, 1959, by Mr. Consul Airey reporting on the crisis which has arisen in the date growing industry in Basra Liwa. Reports of a serious shortage in this year's date crop have been current for some time. The enclosed despatch shows that the problem is one which has been building up over a number of years and is not primarily due to the disorganisation of agriculture caused by the revolution. It is clear, however, that the situation is a serious one particularly as Basra Liwa produces all the high quality dates, which normally finds an easy market, and that fairly drastic remedies will be required if the industry is to be revived.

2. I am sending copies of this despatch with its enclosure to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, to the Commercial Relations and Exports Department of the Board of Trade, and without enclosure to Her Majesty's Consulate-General, Basra.

I have, &amp;c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

*Mr. Airey to Sir Humphrey Trevelyan (Baghdad)*

No. 3

Sir,

British Consulate-General, Basra,

October 22, 1959.

I have the honour to report that there is every sign of the approach of a major crisis in the date growing industry in Basra Liwa. The purpose of this despatch is to assess the extent of the crisis, adduce some reasons for its occurrence, and examine the proposal put forward for its solution.

2. The matter has been the subject of an increasing volume of Press comment from both Nationalist and Communist papers, both of which related the same story as to the history of the crisis and, with minor differences induced by the need to square the facts with Communist doctrine, as to the reasons for its occurrence. It is more difficult to assess the extent of the damage to the local economy other than in general terms.

3. The first fact that emerges is that the immediate effects of the crisis are not uniform. The worst hit areas are those most badly affected by this year's poor date crop. The principal district involved is that from the Khorra Creek to the Abu Eelous Creek to the south of Basra, which includes a large part of Abu Al Khaseeb Qadha. Here a recent Press report suggested that the crop was only 5 to 10 per cent of that of a normal year, and this is borne out by reports from Western employees of date packing firms. In other areas, notably that round Qurmat Ali to the north of Basra, this season has been relatively good, though still not up to the standard of the normal year. There are the exceptions, however, and the reports suggest that the average grower, whose income in a normal year would be about ID500, will this year only obtain ID20. I have been able to discover no evidence which contradicts this general picture.

4. All sources are agreed that the history of the problem is a long one. The gradual process of decline evidently began before the Second World War, when date prices fell suddenly to ID8 per kara. As a result a monopoly contract was concluded with Messrs. Andrew Weir in 1939 with agreed prices of ID20 per kara of Hallawi, ID18.500 for Khadrawi and ID14 for Sayer. These prices continued for three seasons, after which prices rose until in 1952 (when Andrew Weirs gave up their monopoly) Khadrawi sold for ID55 and Sayer for ID45

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per kara. These prices must be viewed in relation to production costs. The annual cost of cultivation of a jerib (the basic unit of land equivalent to about 1½ donams) in 1939 has been quoted as ID3.500 when the weekly wage of a labourer was 150 fils. The equivalent cost to-day is quoted as being over five times that figure, whilst the weekly wage of unskilled labour is now 900 fils, with skilled men receiving more. The cost of living is also alleged to have risen to five times what it was in 1939 (on a basis of comparison of prices for bread, rent and clothes).

5. Over a long period, therefore, date prices in world markets have been overtaken by heavy increases in cost of production and the living expenses of the growers. To this has been added a series of poor harvests, culminating in the present year's disastrous conditions. The causes of these are, according to my sources, chiefly economic, arising out of the facts given in the previous paragraphs. Most of the small growers are men of little wealth who, as peasants, bought their land in the war period with the help of loans from the Agricultural Bank, on which fixed annual rates of interest and repayment of principal are levied, the terms of the loans being relatively short. One source has said that the annual rate of interest and repayment even in a good year was equivalent in most cases to more than half the annual income from the land, and hence relatively higher in years when the harvest falls below the average standard. The land was the only collateral the growers could offer, and they were thus faced with a choice between borrowing from the money lenders in the old way, which they knew would inevitably lead to the eventual loss of their property, selling the land to repay the loan and seeking other work (again with the loss of their land), or cutting down on the amount they expended on cultivating the land. The majority chose the latter, particularly as in many cases the relatively good years during the war had led to an increase in their standard of living, many of them had left their huts on the land to live in the towns and no longer worked their land themselves in person. The result was a steady decline in the productive capacity of the trees and in their ability to withstand the onslaught of pests. The two basic items neglected were the feeding of the trees with manure (produced by the branch industry of cattle raising which has itself declined to a shadow of its former scale) and the maintenance of irrigation canals which has led to a steady reduction in the area of date groves under cultivation. It will be seen from this exposition of the problem that the industry is caught in a vicious circle of decline, and it is small wonder that there are calls on the Government to take some action to halt it, particularly this year when the affairs have taken a further steep drop towards disaster with the coincident attacks of pests and the absence of a period of high humidity during the summer, required to swell the dates, which have intensified this process of decline.

6. The measures proposed are:

- (a) Deferment of instalments due on loans to the Agricultural Bank;
- (b) Further Government advances to growers repayable over a long term;
- (c) Acceptance by the Government of responsibility for the dredging and maintenance of the main branch canals;
- (d) Various proposals for Government investigation of methods of cultivation, control of pests, and development of new products from both trees and dates;
- (e) Amendment of the Agrarian Reform Law to include land under date cultivation, and to reduce the present upper limit for total holdings (1,000 donams), since this successfully excludes most of the larger holdings by absentee landlords in Basra, the majority of which are just under this figure.

Of these there is no sign of (a) being agreed. Government advances to "peasants" seem at present to be restricted (a) to those who own their own land and (b) to those cultivating cereal crops, not dates. However, study of this question by the authorities still seems to be in progress (the committee in Basra Liwa, which is composed of two representatives of the local Agrarian Reform Directorate, one representative from the Federation of Peasant Societies and one representative from the Society for the district under review, had by the end of September only examined the position in the Qurna area where only 400 out of 1,000 peasants had been recommended for advances), and when the committee comes to examine the situation in the more southerly districts, where cereal crops are insignificant,

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something may yet be done. On point (c) the principle at least seems to have been accepted before the Revolution, since a start had been made on the dredging of the Khor Creek. The contract, however, was the subject of much scandal, and was never completed, and since the Revolution there has been no sign of any further work of this kind. This contract was let by the Beladiya Council, only indirectly an organ of the central Government, who would hardly seem the appropriate body to perform this sort of duty. The Date Association already accepts responsibility for the items mentioned in point (d). Before the Revolution it had succeeded in building up an expert staff, including several men trained in America in scientific methods of pest control, disinfection, &c. These men were mostly purged after the Revolution, and the benefit of their training and experience which was just beginning to appear has been entirely lost. There is much local dissatisfaction, particularly on the problem of pest control, and there is clearly room here for a major effort from the central Government.

7. Point (e) emerged from a study of the situation by a committee specially appointed by the Minister of Agriculture composed of Ja'afar Al Badr (Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce, a leader of the National Democratic Party in Basra and editor of *Nida Al Ahali*, the organ of the National Democratic Party in Basra), Muhammad Al Abd Allah Al Falih As Sa'adoon (a national leader of the N.D.P. recently elected as Deputy President of Executive of the Journalist Union, and a member of the Board of the Date Association. He recently accompanied the Manager of the Date Trading Company to Moscow to negotiate an agreement on the fulfillment of previous date contracts with the Soviet Union), Abd Al Hamid Hussain An Nasir (Acting Director-General of the Date Association, and a leading Communist, who has recently headed an Iraqi trade delegation to the Far East) and Dr. Abd As Sahib Al 'Alwan (a member of the Agrarian Reform Committee). I enclose a translation of the Resumé and Recommendation contained in their reports as published in *Nida Al Ahali* on the 2nd of October. There are two noteworthy features in this document; firstly the frank admission that bad relations with the landowners is at the bottom of much of the industry's troubles (this was also stated in an interview with the President of the Federation of Peasant Societies published in *Saut At Tali'a* on the 3rd of October—he even went as far as to admit that peasants had recently neglected their work due to their "preoccupation with trivial matters") and secondly the pointer in the direction of very small holdings worked under supervision of co-operatives. In this connection the announcement of the formation of co-operative societies in the Central and Southern areas (see Basra Summary for July, Section II (3)) is perhaps significant.

8. To sum up: the date growing industry (as distinct from the packing and selling side) is going through a period of financial difficulty, public opinion on the issue has been aroused, there are signs of Government interest in the problem, but no signs of action as yet. The solutions proposed are partly traditional (recourse to borrowing money to tide over the crisis) and partly radical (breakdown of holdings into smaller units under co-operatives). It remains to be seen what policy the Government will adopt, but some decision on the solution of immediate difficulties cannot long be delayed without causing widespread financial distress and a wave of foreclosures by the Agricultural Bank.

I have, &c.

(Signed) S. R. AIREY.

Enclosure

#### TRANSLATION FROM *NIDA AL AHADI* OF OCTOBER 2, 1959

#### A STUDY OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE EXPLOITATION OF BASRA GARDENS AND THE RIGHTS OF DISPOSAL OF THEM

#### Resumé and Recommendations

The problem of the exploitation of the gardens and the right of disposing of them in Basra Liwa is not confined solely to the peasants, the tu'aba and the landowners, but generally influences the vast majority of the residents of Basra

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Liwa, for whom the cultivation of date palms and the trade and industry of dates forms the principal source of their livelihood. The discovery of a solution to this problem, therefore, will mean benefiting the majority of the classes of Basra society.

The relations between landowners, peasants and tu'aba became increasingly bad in recent years. This led to the occurrence of disputes and altercations, disrupting production and resulting in the migration of the tu'aba and the peasants from the gardens, which became ruinous, because they were neglected and because of the small number of persons working in them. The peasants and tu'aba always demand an increase in their share of the produce and recognition of their rights in the land which they have cultivated. The landowners resist these demands because they are suffering from financial difficulty caused by the costs of production and the cost of living rising very much more than the rise in date prices. Therefore we find the landowners jealous of controlling the largest possible amount of land and refusing to grant the demands of the peasants to increase their share, so that they may obtain sufficient to assure themselves of a living.

Our investigations have shown that the culture of date palms is no longer profitable economically by reason of the rise in the costs of production and the cost of living and a decline in the price of dates, which has made the income on capital invested in this kind of agriculture fail to exceed 3 to 3½ per cent, which is a small profit compared with that obtained with capital invested in other economic pursuits. This small profit has begun to affect the landowners, the tu'aba and the peasants at the same time. We therefore consider that the idea of Agrarian Reform in this Liwa ought to take into consideration the general economic conditions of the fallah, the tu'aba and the landowner, and to try to find practical solutions which would include, in addition to a peaceful solution of their problems, the increase in the standard of production of the land and hence in general economic standards.

We have tried to come to grips with these problems and with the solutions appropriate to them in a suitably detailed manner, and we have found that the establishment and spread of small properties by means of limiting the size of large properties and distributing the rest of them to the peasants and the tu'aba cannot, by itself be a complete cure for the problems we have quoted in this report. So far as we are concerned the matter must be part of a general idea of reform which would include the establishment of co-operative societies with many objects whose duties must include the provision of advances and equipment, marketing, guidance and administration as a basic condition, since the facts of the conditions of small properties, which have come into existence in recent years under the Amiri Lands Allocation Law No. 46 of 1941 confirm the inability of the peasants to develop the land and exploit it completely and efficiently without obtaining the assistance referred to above. Therefore we find that the standard of development in these small properties has dropped to a degree in which they are no longer capable of providing a living for the peasants themselves, and hence have caused, as an inevitable result of their ruin, a fall in the standard of production of dates in that area. It will be useful if we mention here that the resumé of our investigations and conversations with a group of landowners, tu'aba and fellaheen and those concerned with date affairs and with its trade, have resulted in almost unanimous agreement on the highest limit for properties in the date gardens, which ought not to exceed at any time 200 jerib, that is about 360 donams, and on the lower limit which should not exceed at any time 10 jerib or about 16 donams. And whilst we are on the subject of the higher limit for properties we ought to repeat that these properties cannot be expected to give any better results than those produced by the experiment of small properties not subject to supervision, guidance and assistance, because the owner of lands at the higher limit is generally also weak financially and is unable to carry out the exploitation of his land by himself, which obliges him to give up part of it to his agents. And if we add to that the fact that the price of produce at the present time will not bring him a clear income with which he will be able to cover the costs of his production and his living expenses, we shall have a clear picture of what the conditions of properties at the higher limit will be from such points of view as the lowering of the standard of their development and hence their ruin and the decline of their productive capacity.

We therefore consider that it is essential, in order to maintain the development of the date gardens and to raise the level of production in them that we should

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propose that it should no longer be considered necessary to preserve the higher limit for properties, and that all the date gardens should be distributed to the actual exploiters of them, that is, to the tu'aba and peasants, in small holdings subject to supervision and guidance, whose area should not exceed 10 jerin or 16 donams, and that the landowners should be compensated in a just manner, after the type of land has been determined and the share of the Government taken from them.

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No. 32

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received December 9)*

(No. 1714. Confidential. Telegraphic)

Baghdad,

Sir,

December 9, 1959.

Iraq internal situation.

I saw Hashim Jawad, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the 9th of December. The following points emerged.

2. Jawad considered that the enquiry into the attempt on Qasim's life had been in excellent hands. He had seen the report and was satisfied that it was a Ba'athist plot directly organised and timed by the U.A.R. in Cairo and Damascus with the collusion of the U.A.R. Embassy in Baghdad. The accused would be tried by the People's Court under Mahdawi. During the trial the U.A.R. would be attacked, but he had done his best to ensure that other countries would not be attacked on this occasion.

3. I expressed my doubts about Qasim's remarks on the internal situation. Jawad said that he had read the whole text of the Press conference and although some other Ambassadors also had expressed disquiet, he did not consider it showed any deviation from Qasim's previous line. Qasim had declared himself to be against extremes. On [group undecipherable] Qasim was opposed only to the Ba'athists. His opinions had now crystallised in a much more satisfactory way than when Jawad left for the United Nations in September.

4. I quoted Qasim's remarks in his Press conference: "I wish to inform you that an avaricious country as well as imperialist countries are inciting and re-enforcing agents in this country from behind the screen to plot against the Republic." I said any normal person would interpret this as meaning that the U.A.R. and the British and American Governments were employing agents in Iraq to plot against the Iraqi Government. The Minister replied that all he could say was that Qasim certainly did not think this. He had tried to get the Prime Minister to give up using the word "imperialist". I said that if Qasim did not think this, it would be much better if he did not say it.

5. I reminded Jawad that he had told me that the Kirkuk disturbances were a Communist conspiracy. Now Qasim was taking almost completely opposite view, which was remarkably like the Soviet propaganda line on Kirkuk. Jawad replied that the part of the Ba'athists in the Kirkuk disturbances had been subsequently revealed by the enquiry. There was also undoubtedly some Ba'athist infiltration into the ranks of the students, using the Students' United Front as a cover, though he maintained his view that the results of the students' elections would have been very different if some of the principals of the schools and colleges had been changed.

6. I reminded him that he had looked forward to Qasim [group undecipherable] issuing a detailed programme. He said that Qasim considered that his statement at the Press conference was a sufficient programme. Jawad thought the National Democrats should now produce their detailed programme and he was continually urging Hadid to get on with it. There would be no draft constitution before the licensing of political parties on the 6th of January, but Qasim's political ideas would become clear after that when the draft constitution and electoral law were drawn up. On his ideas for reorganisation of the Government and government machinery he said nothing.

7. On my enquiry, he said reports of a large number of arrests of teachers in Baghdad were not true. Only a few people had been arrested in Baghdad. He was personally enquiring about the arrest of Mohammed Nassir (my telegram No. 1696, paragraph 3). It was not in connection with his organisation of Nationalists' Front for teachers' elections. He wished some Communists would be arrested.

My comments follow.



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No. 33

## IRAQ INTERNAL SITUATION

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received December 19)*(No. 1761. Confidential. Telegraphic)  
Sir,Baghdad,  
December 19, 1959.

On the 18th of December the National Democrats organised a procession of peasants ostensibly celebrating Qasim's recovery but really as a counter to the Communist procession two weeks ago and in order to demonstrate their power in the countryside. They also had in mind the possible effect on Qasim of a peasant demonstration that others besides Communists were prepared to show publicly their support of him. The arrangements for collecting peasants from distant parts were not perfect and most of the peasants came from nearer districts.

2. The procession was an undoubted success and N.D.P. estimated that between 200,000 and 250,000 took part. National Democrat Ministers were on the saluting platform at the Ministry of Defence with Qasim. The Communists attacked the procession in their newspapers and did their best to infiltrate it. Outside the Ministry of Defence a few of their adherents were shouting for Mahdawi, sometimes linked with Qasim's name, and at one point on the route a small Communist group was dispersed by troops. However, the procession was undoubtedly effective in showing that Communist-organised processions in Baghdad can be balanced by non-Communist demonstrations by peasants.

3. The National Democrats were rightly pleased at the result of their efforts. Security precautions were good and there were no disturbances.

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## APPENDIX

## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

No. 34

## IRAQ: HEADS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

*Sir Humphrey Trevelyan to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received September 29)*(No. 103. Confidential) Baghdad,  
Sir, September 22, 1959.

With reference to Sir Michael Wright's despatch No. 177 of the 3rd of December, 1958, I enclose the annual report on the Heads of Foreign Missions in Baghdad.

I have, &amp;c.

HUMPHREY TREVELYAN.

## Enclosure

(Passages marked with an asterisk are reproduced from previous reports)

## Afghanistan

M. Mohammed Chouaib Miskinyar, Ambassador (April 6, 1959).

M. Miskinyar is very amiable and professes with apparent sincerity his strong pro-British sentiment. His goodwill is more obvious than his ability. He has a wife and two grown-up daughters with him. They are hospitable but not socially experienced.

## Belgium

Diplomatic representation between Belgium and Iraq was raised to Ambassadorial level in December 1958. M. Fredegand Cogels, previously Belgian Minister here, presented his credentials as first Belgian Ambassador on December 6. He left Iraq on transfer to Brussels on May 18 and his successor has not yet been appointed.

## Bulgaria

M. Radenco Grigorov, Ambassador (September 9, 1958).

\*M. Grigorov was appointed Bulgarian Minister to North Korea in August 1954, and Ambassador in May 1955. In 1957 he returned to take up the direction of a department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Written in 1958.)

He gives the impression of being rigid and doctrinaire but is not personally aggressive. He is alone in Baghdad.

## People's Republic of China

Mr. Chen Chih-fang, Ambassador (September 22, 1958).

He was formerly an official in Canton. He has the smile of a tiger about to eat his prey. Speaking no English, he is at something of a handicap at public functions, but he is not to be underestimated and we have reason to believe that he is active in the Communist cause. He has a pleasant wife who is socially very presentable.

## Czechoslovakia

M. Josef Zabokrtsky, Ambassador (October 6, 1958).

\*The first Czechoslovakian Embassy in Iraq was opened on September 15, 1958. M. Zabokrtsky was previously Minister in Damascus until the establishment of the United Arab Republic. (Written in 1958.)

M. Zabokrtsky is cheerful, pleasant to meet and probably intelligent. He has a wife in Czechoslovakia who is unable to come to Baghdad for family reasons.

## Denmark

M. Christian D. Holten Eggert, Minister (November 8, 1958—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, May 9, 1956).

M. Eggert normally resides in Cairo. In his absence the Legation is run by M. Troels Munk, Counsellor of the Embassy, who replaced M. de Jonquieres on May 30. M. Troels Munk was formerly in the Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in the Danish delegation to the United Nations. He is a friendly cheerful man who works hard. He and his attractive red-haired wife are a considerable social asset to Baghdad.

## Germany (Federal Republic)

Dr. Herbert Richter, Ambassador (November 17, 1958—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, November 28, 1957).

\*Dr. Richter was born in Dresden in 1899. Having qualified as a doctor of law, he entered the German Foreign Service in 1924. Prior to the war he served in Berlin, Rome, Bombay, Addis Ababa, Colombo and Calcutta (where he was five years as Consul). He was Consul in Tetuan from 1939 to 1945. After the war he served in the Land Ministry of Justice at Hamburg and in the District Office at Cologne. He returned to the Foreign Service in 1951 when he was appointed Consul-General at Bombay. In 1952 he was appointed Counsellor at New Delhi where he remained until his present appointment. He is married and has a daughter and a small son. (Written in 1958.)

Dr. Richter, having started his career as Private Secretary to the Permanent Head of the German Foreign Office, is regarded in his own Service as being a somewhat disappointed man. However, he and his wife take a lot of trouble about their job and the German Embassy has had wide contacts among the Iraqis through the most difficult times. Dr. and Mrs. Richter are very friendly, and have shown themselves co-operative with us. They both speak good English.

## Holy See

Mgr. Armand Etienne Blanquet du Chayla, Apostolic Delegate (November 20, 1948).

\*Mgr. du Chayla, Latin Archbishop of Baghdad, a Frenchman and a member of the Carmelite Order, was appointed Apostolic Delegate in 1948. He is a



cousin of the former French Ambassador in Cairo, and a descendant of the French admiral defeated by Nelson at the Battle of the Nile.

A courtly and cultivated figure, aristocratic and fastidious, whom it is a pleasure to meet and who gives the impression of a Cardinal *manqué*. He is outspokenly tired of this country and frankly critical of the shortcomings of its people. The departure of most other cultivated Frenchmen has left him rather high and dry in Iraq but he sees no prospect of release. His health is indifferent. (Written in 1958.)

#### Hungary

M. Vencel Házi, Ambassador (October 29, 1958). The first Hungarian Embassy in Iraq was opened here on October 1, 1958.

M. and Mme. Vencel Házi are a pleasant pair with a sense of humour and a nostalgia for their life *en poste* in London which they take no trouble to conceal. They dislike Baghdad intensely.

#### Indonesia

The previous Minister, Haj Mansur Datuk Kayo, left on May 23. The Legation is now in the charge of the Counsellor, M. Sudio Gandarum.

#### Iran

M. Amanollah Ardalan, Ambassador (January 24, 1959).

M. Amanollah Ardalan is of a well-known Kurdish family and has had a distinguished career in Iran. He has been seven times a Minister since 1923, and Governor of various counties and provinces. He has been a Deputy in five Majles and Vice-President of the Majles from 1955 to 1958. He has been rightly described as an excellent example of the old school of conservative politician, though he is not a very forceful personality. He is a widower aged 70 and this is his first diplomatic post. Without any previous diplomatic experience he does not appear to find the job easy at a time when Iranian-Iraqi relations are passing through a difficult phase. He lacks self-confidence and is at times somewhat naïve, but he is most friendly, forthcoming and co-operative and is always ready to discuss his problems frankly.

#### Italy

Signor Renato della Chiesa d'Isasca, Minister (September 15, 1958—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, May 13, 1958).

\*Signor della Chiesa is 55 and entered the Italian Foreign Service in 1933. He was Consul in Nairobi after the war, and in 1949-50 Secretary in Washington where he had also served before the war. During 1951 he was a member of the Italian Delegation to the United Nations and was then appointed Counsellor at Addis Ababa. He returned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1955 where he served as head of the South-East Asia and Far Eastern Department.

He is a spare, aristocratic figure with a quiet manner which conceals considerable strength of character. He has an acute intelligence and a ready wit which he reveals when it suits him. Something of an eccentric, he speaks excellent English. (Written in 1958.)

Signor della Chiesa is rather a disappointed man. He was offered last year, but turned down, the post of Italian Minister in Washington.

He does not wish to stay much longer in Baghdad. He has an attractive and intelligent wife about the same age as himself. She lives for much of the year in Italy and is unlikely to return to Baghdad for long, since she was ill on her last visit. They have a grown-up son who has visited Baghdad.

#### Japan

The former Minister, Mr. Shiro Ishiguro, left Baghdad on transfer on February 12. The Legation is in the charge of the Counsellor, Mr. Mikitaro Matsuno.

#### Jordan

In consequence of the formation of the Arab Union between Iraq and Jordan, the Jordan Embassy in Baghdad was closed down on July 12, 1958. Relations have not been resumed since the dissolution of the Union on July 14, 1958.

#### Lebanon

M. Kazem el Solh, Ambassador for 10½ years, has now slipped away unobtrusively and does not intend to return. The Embassy is at present in charge of M. Mounir Nusouli.

#### Morocco

Si Al Haj Fatmi ben Slimen, Ambassador (September 15, 1958—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, December 18, 1956).

\*Haj Fatmi was the first Moroccan Ambassador to be appointed to an Arab country of the Middle East. Born at Fez in 1908, he served in the Customs Administration from 1923 to 1927, as Khalifa of Meknes from 1937 to 1944 and as the Grand Vizier's *Délégué* for Education from 1945 to 1953, and became President of the High Shereefian Tribunal. Becoming Pasha of Fez in 1946, he is reputed to have made a fortune in that capacity. In October 1955, he was invited by the Council of Guardians of the Throne to form a Government, but resigned, without having done so, upon the Sultan's return. He became Governor of Fez in 1955.

Haj Fatmi is a devout Moslem and an engaging personality. He is a close friend of the Sultan. (Written in 1957.) \*He has done his best to cultivate close relations between his own country and Iraq. His father was once decorated by King George V, he has a great love of Britain and retains a strong admiration for France. His influence has been consistently in favour of moderation and he has been a respected and much-liked colleague. He speaks excellent French but no English.

His wife rarely goes out. (Written in 1958.)

#### Netherlands

M. C. Vreede, Minister (February 2, 1958).

\*M. Vreede was born in 1908 and obtained a doctorate in classics at the University of Leiden. He joined the Netherlands Foreign Service in 1945 and worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until 1948. He has served subsequently in Washington and Bonn.

He has proved a sensible and level-headed colleague and is most ready to co-operate freely and exchange confidences. He talks good but not always intelligible English.

His wife is pleasant and sociable. (Written in 1958.)

#### Poland

M. Kazimierz Krawczynski, Chargé d'Affaires (September 23, 1958).

M. Krawczynski left on August 15 and an Ambassador is now expected.

#### Roumania

M. Ion Georgescu, Ambassador (May 27, 1959).

Roumania has hitherto been represented in Iraq by the Roumanian Ambassador in Cairo. M. Georgescu is the first Ambassador to reside in Baghdad. In 1950 he was the First Secretary of the Roumanian Legation in Cairo. In 1956 and 1957

he was an acting Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and in 1957 was appointed Minister to Teheran, being accredited also to Afghanistan. He remained in Teheran until his transfer to Baghdad. Sir Roger Stevens found him "a revolting little man" but he has far been reasonably inoffensive here. He seems to be much taken up with a stomach ulcer which flares up in spring and autumn, and his rather formidable wife has come to Baghdad particularly to look after his health.

#### Saudi Arabia

Shaikh Ibrahim As Sunayil, Ambassador (September 25, 1958—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, July 2, 1957).

\*Shaikh Ibrahim was born in 1916 at Anaiza, studied at Cairo University and entered the Saudi Foreign Service. He was First Secretary at Cairo from 1943 to 1952, and Counsellor at Beirut from 1952 to 1955. (Written in 1957.) \*Immediately before his appointment to Baghdad he was Permanent Head of the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs where his work appeared to be mainly to act as a post-box for the Court at Riyadh. He speaks good English and shows himself to be friendly on the rare occasions when we meet socially. (Written in 1958.)

#### Spain

His Excellency Professor Emilio Garcia Gomez, Ambassador (September 1, 1958).

\*The former Spanish Ambassador, Don Jose Ricardo Gomez-Acebo y Vazquez, left Baghdad on the termination of his appointment on July 7, 1958. His replacement is a well-known Orientalist; born in 1905, he is not a career diplomat, but has represented Spain at a number of international conferences, including the UNESCO Consultative Committee in 1958. He studied at the Universities of Madrid and Cairo and held the chairs of Arabic at Granada and Madrid Universities. He has published works on Moorish and Andalusian poetry and is a member of the Royal Spanish Academy and of the Royal Academy of History. Well known at Oxford and Cambridge, he has lectured widely abroad.

He and his wife are charming and sincere colleagues. He speaks good French and a little English; his wife speaks both fluently and vivaciously. (Written in 1958.)

#### Sudan

M. Khalifa Abbas el Obeid arrived in August 1959 after being Sudanese Ambassador in Addis Ababa. He was formerly in the Sudan Railways. He is very friendly, but at first sight seems to be rather more pompous and less intelligent than his predecessor.

#### Switzerland

M. Egbert de Graffenried, Minister (November 3, 1958—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, December 18, 1956).

M. de Graffenried is accredited also in Beirut, Amman and Damascus and resides in Beirut. The Legation in Baghdad is conducted by M. Sigismund Marcuard, who replaced the former Chargé d'Affaires, M. Bucher, on April 4, 1959.

M. Marcuard has recently been in Paris and Berne. He is intelligent, likeable and a keen horseman. He has an attractive and intelligent English wife.

\*Since November 1956, the Swiss have been responsible for French interests in Iraq. M. Max Rudolf Joss (Attaché), an agreeable diplomat from Zürich, has an unwilling responsibility for French affairs. (Written in 1958.)

#### Tunisia

M. Mohammed Al Habib Al Shatti, resident in Beirut, left in January 1959. A new Ambassador is expected soon.

The Embassy in Baghdad is normally conducted by the Counsellor, M. Mohammed al Arousi al Matoui, who speaks French and is friendly but rather nervous.

#### Turkey

M. Fuat Bayramoglu, Ambassador (June 6, 1959).

The previous Ambassador, General Turkmen, left Baghdad on May 7.

M. Fuat Bayramoglu was formerly Turkish Consul-General in Cyprus and then Ambassador in Oslo after four years in Ankara. He is friendly and seems a reasonable and sensible person. His wife has not yet arrived.

#### United Arab Republic

M. Sayid Fahmi, Ambassador (August 1, 1958).

\*We have no relations with the Embassy of the U.A.R. My colleagues tell me that Sayid Fahmi is a pleasant and friendly person. He was the first Ambassador to present his credentials to the new régime. He speaks good English. His wife seems quiet and apparently speaks French. (Written in 1958.)

At the time of the Mosul revolt M. Fahmi was in Egypt and he has not since returned. The Iraq Government expelled 10 of the Embassy which has since been in charge of the Counsellor, M. Mo'ayad al Azam of the well-known Syrian clan. M. al Azam seems quite capable and is willing to talk freely when I meet him at parties. He has had an extremely difficult job during the time when relations between Iraq and the U.A.R. have been thoroughly bad, but he has kept up his end well.

#### Soviet Union

M. Gregory Titovitch Zaitsev, Ambassador (September 9, 1958).

\*Diplomatic relations between Iraq and the USSR were resumed very shortly after the revolution of July 14, and M. Zaitsev arrived in Baghdad on August 5, 1958. Born about 1902, he is a graduate in oriental studies, and has served in Iran. He was previously Ambassador in Iraq in the period before relations were broken off by Nuri Said. After a tour as Ambassador to the Netherlands, he became Director in 1953 of the Near and Middle East Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow. He accompanied M. Shepilov to Cairo in June 1956 and to the Suez Conference in London in August 1956. He is married with one child but his family have not yet joined him in Baghdad. He speaks fair English and good Persian. (Written in 1958.)

The Soviet Embassy has been very active since the revolution and for a time was in something of the same position as the British Embassy before it. M. Zaitsev is doubtless capable, but his personality is not impressive. Though he is superficially friendly at parties he shows no sign of wishing to get on any personal terms with his non-Communist colleagues.

#### United States

Mr. John D. Jernegan, Ambassador (January 12, 1959).

The previous Ambassador, Mr. W. J. Gallman, left Iraq on December 14, 1958.

Mr. Jernegan has served recently as Minister-Counsellor in Rome, Deputy Assistant Secretary of



State for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, and Consul-General in Tunis. This is his first post as Head of Mission. He is quiet, sensible and balanced, and does not easily get rattled. He has been very co-operative with us from the first and the two Embassies are much closer than they were in the days of his predecessor. He is capable and intelligent and was so found by those who dealt with him in Washington, though he was described there as afflicted with the excessive caution which plagues the State Department. He seems somewhat lacking in vitality, which may be the reason for the rather disappointing impression which he made on his British colleagues in Rome. My experience over a difficult period in Baghdad inclines me to support the more favourable impression which he made on our Embassy in Washington. He has a friendly and pleasant wife and four children at the post.

#### Yugoslavia

M. Nijaz Dizdarevic, Ambassador (September 15, 1958).

\*The first Yugoslavian Embassy in Iraq was opened in September 1958. The Ambassador was born in 1920 in Bosnia, a Moslem, and graduated in Oriental languages at Belgrade University. He joined the partisans in 1941, and in 1944-45 was Secretary of the Military Mission in Albania. Since the war, he has served in Ankara, and Cairo, and more recently held important posts in the Executive Council of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Central Committee of the Bosnian Communist Party.

He speaks Arabic, Turkish, Italian and French. (Written in 1958.)

M. Dizdarevic is an excellent colleague. He is shrewd and well informed about the political scene which he studies very closely, and he is always ready for a frank analytical discussion about Arab and Iraqi politics. He appears genuinely to believe that Yugoslav and British interests in Iraq are in line, and he does not allow any doctrinaire preconceptions to affect his objective view of the Iraqi scene. He is no friend of the Soviet Union. He has a pleasant wife who speaks French.

#### Missions Accredited to Iraq without Representatives Resident in Baghdad

(Dates in parenthesis refer to presentation of credentials in Baghdad)

##### Albania

M. Ulvi Lulo, Ambassador (October 1, 1958)—Cairo.

##### Austria

M. Kurt Farbowsky, Minister (January 29, 1959—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, April 3, 1957)—Beirut.

##### Ethiopia

M. Mered Mengasha, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.*—Cairo.

##### Greece

M. Anastase Antonopoulos (March 12, 1959).

##### Libya

M. Ali Essad el-Jarbi, Minister—Ankara.

##### Mexico

Sr. Marco A. Almazan, Chargé d'Affaires (February 3, 1951)—Beirut.

##### Norway

M. Ivar Lunde, Minister (February 14, 1959—accredited to His Majesty King Feisal II, February 19, 1957)—Ankara.

##### Portugal

Sr. Jose Joaquim de Mena e Mendonco, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.*—Ankara.

##### Sweden

M. Michens Bergstrom, Minister (April 20, 1959)—Teheran.

##### Thailand

Luang Bhadravadi, Minister (January 1, 1958)—Karachi.